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THE REIGN

OF

LEWIS XI.

BY

P. F. WILLERT, M.A.

FELLOW OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

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WITH MAP

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PREFACE.

Now that the serious study of modern languages and history is making some way in our public schools, I know of no fitter text-book for the higher forms than the "Memoirs of Philip de Commines." The work of that subtle and judicious politician is by far the best example we possess of French prose, at a time when it has become perfectly clear and intelligible, while still retaining archaisms interesting to the student of the development of the French tongue. Nor is the matter of Commines less valuable. He has been justly esteemed as the first among the writers of Western Europe to rival the great names of antiquity. His work as a manual of statecraft may rank with those of Thucydides or Tacitus or Macchiavelli. But a student who should read his narrative only, might find it difficult to form any clear conception of the somewhat confused events and intrigues of the reign of Lewis XI. He might perhaps be perplexed to find that ruler presented in a light so different from that in which, owing to an early acquaintance with "Quentin Durward," he may have learnt to regard him. It is true that the consolidation of the French kingdom

by the most able of the Valois, and the struggle between France and Burgundy has been fully traced by many distinguished authors, among others by M. de Barante in his most interesting "History of the Dukes of Burgundy," by Sismondi, and Michelet, and Henry Martin in the course of their great works, and by Mr. Kirk in his "Life of Charles the Bold." But these books may not happen to be easily within reach of the schoolboy or even of the undergraduate. This little book, accordingly, attempts to give a connected, a clear, and a tolerably full account of the events and the nature of a reign which left France a consolidated and powerful nation, fully prepared for the part she was destined to play in the great struggle of the next century.

I have used the most important printed documents and authorities illustrating the reign of Lewis XI. Unfortunately a delay in the publication of the letters of Lewis XI., edited by Mlle. Dupont, has deprived me of the great advantage I should doubtless have derived from consulting them. I have not often thought it necessary in an elementary work to refer to my authorities; indeed I have generally only done so where common honesty seemed to require some acknowledgment of my obligations.

As to proper names, where there is a received English form I have employed it; where there is not I have preferred that used in the language spoken

by the natives. Yet I am aware that carelessness—or human nature—has occasionally betrayed me into inconsistency. Charles le Téméraire I have called Charles the Rash, because *téméraire* means rash. *Bold* is a fitter translation of the name given to his great-grandfather, Philippe le *Hardi*.

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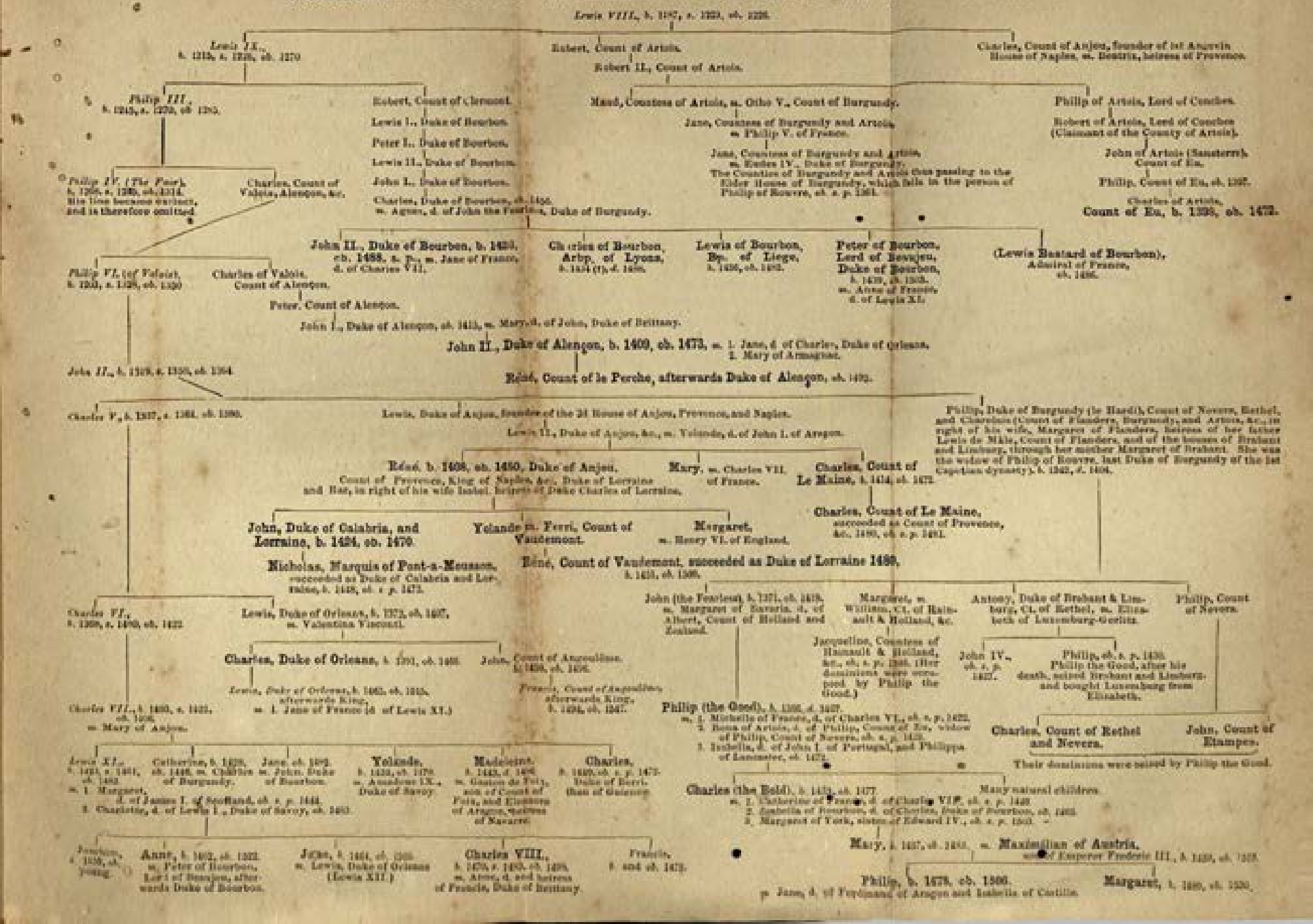
TABLE SHOWING THE DESCENT OF THE PRINCES OF THE BLOOD LIVING DURING THE REIGN OF LEWIS XI.


Lewis VIII., b. 1187, s. 1223, ob. 1226.
Lewis IX., b. 1215, s. 1226, ob. 1270
Robert, Count of Artois.
Charles, Count of Anjou, founder of 1st Angevin House of Naples, m. Beatrix, heiress of Provence.
Robert II., Count of Artois.
Philip III., b. 1245, s. 1270, ob 1285.
Robert, Count of Clermont.
Maud, Countess of Artois, m. Otho V., Count of Burgundy.
Philip of Artois, Lord of Conches.
Lewis I., Duke of Bourbon.
Jane, Countess of Burgundy and Artois, m. Philip V. of France.
Robert of Artois, Lord of Conches (Claimant of the County of Artois).
Peter I., Duke of Bourbon.
Jane, Countess of Burgundy and Artois, m. Eudes IV., Duke of Burgundy.
John of Artois (Sansterre), Count of Eu.
Lewis II., Duke of Bourbon.
The Counties of Burgundy and Artois thus passing to the Elder House of Burgundy, which falls in the person of Philip of Rouvre, ob. s. p. 1361.
John I., Duke of Bourbon.
Philip, Count of Eu, ob. 1397.
Philip IV. (The Fair), b. 1268, s. 1285, ob. 1314. His line became extinct, and is therefore omitted.
Charles, Count of Valois, Alençon, &c.
Charles, Duke of Bourbon, ob. 1456, m. Agnes, d. of John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy.
Charles of Artois, Count of Eu, b. 1398, ob. 1472.
John II., Duke of Bourbon, b. 1426, ob. 1488, s. p., m. Jane of France, d. of Charles VII.
Charles of Bourbon, Archp. of Lyons, b. 1434 (?), d. 1488.
Lewis of Bourbon, Bp. of Liege, b. 1436, ob. 1482.
Peter of Bourbon, Lord of Beaujeu, Duke of Bourbon, b. 1439, ob. 1503, m. Anne of France, d. of Lewis XI.
(Lewis Bastard of Bourbon), Admiral of France, ob. 1486.
Philip VI. (of Valois), b. 1293, s. 1328, ob. 1350
Charles of Valois, Count of Alençon.
Peter, Count of Alençon.
John I., Duke of Alençon, ob. 1415, m. Mary, d. of John, Duke of Brittany.
John II., Duke of Alençon, b. 1409, ob. 1473, m. 1. Jane, d. of Charles, Duke of Orleans. 2. Mary of Armagnac.
John II., b. 1319, s. 1350, ob. 1364.
René, Count of le Perche, afterwards Duke of Alençon, ob. 1492.
Charles V., b. 1337, s. 1364, ob. 1380.
Lewis, Duke of Anjou, founder of the 2d House of Anjou, Provence, and Naples.
Philip, Duke of Burgundy (le Hardi), Count of Nevers, Rethel, and Charolois (Count of Flanders, Burgundy, and Artois, &c., in right of his wife, Margaret of Flanders, heiress of her father Lewis de Mâle, Count of Flanders, and of the houses of Brabant and Limburg, through her mother Margaret of Brabant. She was the widow of Philip of Rouvre, last Duke of Burgundy of the 1st Capetian dynasty), b. 1342, d. 1404.
Lewis II., Duke of Anjou, &c., m. Yolande, d. of John I. of Aragon.
René, b. 1408, ob. 1480, Duke of Anjou, Count of Provence, King of Naples, &c., Duke of Lorraine and Bar, in right of his wife Isabel, heiress of Duke Charles of Lorraine.
Mary, m. Charles VII. of France.
Charles, Count of Le Maine, b. 1414, ob. 1472.
Charles, Count of Le Maine, succeeded as Count of Provence, &c., 1480, ob. s. p. 1481.
John, Duke of Calabria, and Lorraine, b. 1424, ob. 1479.
Yolande m. Ferri, Count of Vaudemont.
Margaret, m. Henry VI. of England.
Nicholas, Marquis of Pont-a-Mousson, succeeded as Duke of Calabria and Lorraine, b. 1448, ob. s. p. 1473.
René, Count of Vaudemont, succeeded as Duke of Lorraine 1480, b. 1451, ob. 1508.
Charles VI., b. 1368, s. 1380, ob. 1422.
Lewis, Duke of Orleans, b. 1372, ob. 1407, m. Valentina Visconti.
John (the Fearless), b. 1371, ob. 1419, m. Margaret of Bavaria, d. of Albert, Count of Holland and Zealand.
Margaret, m. William, Ct. of Hainault & Holland, &c.
Antony, Duke of Brabant & Limburg, Ct. of Rethel, m. Elizabeth of Luxemburg-Goerlitz.
Philip, Count of Nevers.
Charles, Duke of Orleans, b. 1391, ob. 1465.
John, Count of Angoulême, b. 1399, ob. 1467.
Jacqueline, Countess of Hainault & Holland, &c., ob. s. p. 1436. (Her dominions were occupied by Philip the Good.)
John IV., ob. s. p. 1427.
Philip, ob. s. p. 1430. Philip the Good, after his death, seized Brabant and Limburg, and bought Luxemburg from Elizabeth.
Lewis, Duke of Orleans, b. 1462, ob. 1515, afterwards King, m. 1. Jane of France (d. of Lewis XI.)
Francis, Count of Angoulême, afterwards King, b. 1494, ob. 1547.
Charles VII., b. 1403, s. 1422, ob. 1461, m. Mary of Anjou.
Philip (the Good), b. 1396, d. 1467, m. 1. Michelle of France, d. of Charles VI., ob. s. p. 1422. 2. Bona of Artois, d. of Philip, Count of Eu, widow of Philip, Count of Nevers, ob. s. p. 1425. 3. Isabella, d. of John I. of Portugal, and Philippa of Lancaster, ob. 1472.
Charles, Count of Rethel and Nevers.
John, Count of Etampes.
Their dominions were seized by Philip the Good.
Lewis XI., b. 1423, s. 1461, ob. 1483, m. 1. Margaret, d. of James I. of Scotland, ob. s. p. 1444. 2. Charlotte, d. of Lewis I., Duke of Savoy, ob. 1483.
Catherine, b. 1428, ob. 1446, m. Charles of Burgundy.
Jane, ob. 1482, m. John, Duke of Bourbon.
Yolande, b. 1434, ob. 1478, m. Amadeus IX., Duke of Savoy.
Madeleine, b. 1443, d. 1486, m. Gaston de Foix, son of Count of Foix, and Eleanora of Aragon, Princess of Navarre.
Charles, b. 1446, ob. s. p. 1472, Duke of Berri, then of Guienne.
Charles (the Bold), b. 1433, ob. 1477, m. 1. Catherine of France, d. of Charles VII., ob. s. p. 1446. 2. Isabella of Bourbon, d. of Charles, Duke of Bourbon, ob. 1465. 3. Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV., ob. s. p. 1503.
Many natural children.
Joachim, b. 1459, ob. young.
Anne, b. 1462, ob. 1522, m. Peter of Bourbon, Lord of Beaujeu, afterwards Duke of Bourbon.
John, b. 1464, ob. 1500, m. Lewis, Duke of Orleans (Lewis XII.)
Charles VIII., b. 1470, s. 1483, ob. 1498, m. Anne, d. and heiress of Francis, Duke of Brittany.
Francis, b. and ob. 1473.
Mary, b. 1457, ob. 1482, m. Maximilian of Austria, afterwards Emperor Frederic III., b. 1459, ob. 1519.
Philip, b. 1478, ob. 1506, m. Joan, d. of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile.
Margaret, b. 1480, ob. 1530.

LEWIS XI.

France under Charles VII.—Never, perhaps, did the future of the French monarchy appear more dark than when the task of defending its integrity and independence devolved upon the profligate and indolent Charles VII. The premature death of Henry V. had indeed left the English Government exposed to the dangers of a long minority. And the Conqueror on his deathbed seems to have foreseen the difficulty, not only of completing the subjugation of France, but even of retaining the provinces he already held. But Henry had bequeathed the completion of his plans to his brother Bedford, who was little inferior to him as a general, his equal as an administrator, his superior in the art of managing men. The national pride of the English Commons and the cupidity of the aristocracy were alike interested in the conquest of France, and so long as Bedford was successful abroad he might hope to overcome the obstacles which arose at home from the jealous restlessness of his brother, and from the power and ambition of the Bishop of Winchester.

Some revival of national spirit there doubtless was, when the provinces held by the English ceased to be even nominally governed by a French king, but it seemed

vain to battle for a master who lived in some obscure castle under the domination of a De Giac or a La Trémoille. Nor was there any among the princes of the blood whose position and abilities fitted him to become the centre of popular resistance. The Duke of Burgundy trusted to satisfy his vengeance and his ambition by the ruin of his country. The head of the house of Orleans was a prisoner in England. The attention of the Angevin princes was distracted by Italian politics; and although the most prominent member of this house, Yolande of Aragon, Queen-Dowager of Sicily, displayed an intelligence and a patriotism to which history has barely done justice, yet she was unable to overcome the apathy of her son-in-law, or effectively to support the Constable Richemont. The great barons, careful to preserve or to regain their ancient prerogatives of disorder and oppression, were generally careless of the interests of the nation, and although they would not easily have submitted to the stern and impartial government of Henry V., acquiesced in a period of anarchy and impunity; while the clergy, distinguished for the most part by cynical hypocrisy or pharisaical intolerance, seem to have been ready to endure or welcome the congenial rule of the house of Lancaster.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the misery of the country during this period. A man might travel, it was said, from the coast to the borders of Lorraine and Germany without seeing anything but ruined habitations and uncultivated fields. Even in Paris whole streets were deserted, and at night wolves ventured into the town to attack the solitary wayfarer. Bedford could not enforce the stern discipline of Henry V., and the English troops vied in cruelty and licence with the brigands who devastated the country in the name of Charles VII. It seemed

as if only a miracle could save the country. Yet the English were few and scattered; the French needed but to be persuaded of their own strength. The greatness of Joan of Arc ought to be measured not so much by what she did, as by what she would have accomplished had she not been betrayed by the criminal indifference of the king and his advisers. Nor ought we to admire the victories, so much as the pure and saintly character, the simplicity, the fervid enthusiasm, and sober common sense of the peasant girl, of whom that cruel and ignoble generation was unworthy.

Reorganisation of the Government and End of the English Wars.—A conspiracy, headed by Charles of Anjou, Count of Le Maine, and inspired by Yolande of Aragon, drove La Trémoille, the most guilty and the most formidable of the king's favourites, from the Court. Henceforward the Government was conducted with vigour and intelligence. In the latter part of his reign, Charles VII. showed considerable discernment in the choice of his ministers, and even some personal activity and application to public affairs. This change has been attributed to the influence of his mistress, Agnes Sorel, who has, perhaps, without much reason, been represented as the instrument of the Queen-Dowager of Sicily.

The treaty of Arras (1435) ensured the expulsion of the English, but it recognised the existence of Burgundy as an independent power, and purchased the alliance of Philip by concessions dangerous to the future of the French monarchy—concessions which would have been unnecessary had the king allowed a shepherdess to fight and conquer for him.

The work of reconstruction was pursued with skill and success by the king's advisers. "Charles 'the Wise,' Charles V., lived again, if not in Charles VII., at any

rate in the council of Charles 'the well-served,' and with Charles V. his opponent Stephen Marcel. A group of men, most of whom belonged to the middle class, again accomplished, and this time with lasting success, the task which a king had before endeavoured to perform alone. The characteristic of this Government is the pre-eminent place occupied by men of the third estate. Among the eight or ten statesmen who played the most important part in the great events of the later period of this reign we find one prince of a sovereign house, the Constable Richemont, and one gentleman of small estate, the crafty Peter de Brézè; almost all the others, James Cœur, Gaspard and John Bureau, Cousinot, Chevalier, Regnauld and John Jouvenel, are commoners. And these commoners are not, as before, exclusively lawyers, summoned by the Crown to combat the pretensions of the barons; the most illustrious and famous among them is a tradesman."[1]

The complete recovery of the English provinces was delayed by the unsatisfactory organisation, and defective discipline, of the military forces. The French armies had hitherto consisted of the militia of the towns, which was useless in offensive warfare; of the feudal levies, which were alike difficult to keep together and to control; and of the companies of mercenaries, "the flayers," who were often as formidable to their friends as to their enemies. The constable, and his friends in the king's council, determined to form a disciplined, easily handled, and homogeneous body of troops.[2] The royal decrees, which

[1] Martin. Hist. de France, vi. p. 323.

[2] The reform of the army was not actually carried out till 1445, when the expeditions against Lorraine and the Swiss had weakened the companies. Fifteen companies of ordonance, each consisting of 100 lances, were formed; each "lance" consisted of a man-at-arms, three mounted archers, a "coutillier," or light horseman, and a page.

embodied the resolutions of the states-general of Orleans, established for the first time a standing army. This was a measure imperatively demanded by the necessities of the time, but those who supported it were ignorant or careless how powerful a weapon they were placing in the hands of the sovereign, when they persuaded the Estates to sacrifice to present expediency their control over the taxation of the country. If some of the measures carried out by the able men who had obtained the direction of affairs were fraught with future dangers, others deserve more unqualified approval. Commerce was encouraged; an end was put to ruinous and dishonest variations in the value of the currency; the administration of the revenues and expenditure of the country was inquired into and systematised; the University of Paris and other bodies were deprived of privileges which ensured impunity to crime. So many and so various reforms could not be carried out without provoking resistance. Yet the one serious revolt which troubled the reign of Charles VII., that of the great nobles called the "Praguerie," was easily and speedily crushed. The majority of the nation appreciated the efforts which were being made for its welfare. The princes, in a grand remonstrance drawn up some-

The captains of the companies were to be men of experience, not young, nor of great family (this rule was not long observed); and their pay and discipline were carefully provided for in order that they might have neither pretext nor opportunity for pillage and licence. In 1448 an attempt was made to provide an equally effective force of infantry. Each parish was ordered to provide and equip a man skilled in archery. They were to assemble and drill every holyday and feast day, and to be reviewed once a month; and were bound to serve the king whenever and as long as ever he required, at a fixed rate of pay. They were released from all taxes and imposts, whence their name, "Free Archers" (francs archers). The artillery was also improved and organised. Instead of stones iron cannon balls were used, before which the walls of the feudal castles crumbled down.

what later, had indeed the insight to attack what was the weak point in the policy of the Government—its pretension to raise taxes without the consent of the Estates; but they had not the skill to conceal that the true cause of their discontent was the small share they had in the Government, and the check imposed upon their selfish and turbulent ambition. Joan of Arc, an embodiment of the ideal of chivalry, began the restoration of the French monarchy; the continuation of her work was rendered possible by the merchant prince of Bourges, one of the earliest and most enlightened heroes of modern trade and finance.[3] They are types whose existence in the same generation is remarkable, and who could only have met in a period of transition. They were both treated with the same ingratitude by their unworthy prince. But his ingratitude was not unpunished. The betrayal of the Maid of Orleans delayed the liberation of the French territory, and confirmed the rival power of Burgundy. The fall of James Cœur was followed by the revolt of Guienne; and the quarrel with the Dauphin, which embittered the last years of Charles VII., might possibly have been terminated by the mediation of the only one of his father's advisers whom Lewis regarded with admiration and respect.

The anger provoked in England by the loss of the French provinces, and the dangerous pretensions of the Duke of York, determined Queen Margaret and her advisers to profit by the growing discontent of the inhabitants of Guienne, who regretted the loss of their trade, and complained of increased and arbitrary taxation. Bordeaux joyfully opened its gates to an English army, and many of the nobility hastened to join the standard

[3] Martin. Hist. de France, vi. p. 470.

of the old hero Talbot. But the death of the Earl of Shrewsbury and the defeat of Châtillon (1453), though honourable to the vanquished, was followed by the speedy surrender of the towns which they had occupied. The policy or apathy of Charles pardoned his rebellious subjects, and Guienne was henceforth a loyal province of the French Crown.

With the failure of this attempt to regain a footing in the south of France the wars of the English and their dominion on the Continent may be said to end. Calais,[4] indeed, still remained, and was highly prized as securing a continual opportunity of revenge and as the first stage of a triumphant march on Paris. But though angry and humiliated, the English were unwilling to renew expeditions by which of late so little honour or profit had been gained, and from which so few had returned to their native land. Yet the victims of the barren struggle of York and Lancaster might have furnished armies more numerous than those which conquered at Crecy and Agincourt. With the influence of the foreign wars and of the loss of her continental dominions on England we are not concerned, nor can we more than briefly glance at the effects of the struggle and of its successful termination on France. 1. The English wars developed the feeling of nationality, a feeling energetically expressed in the letter of Joan of Arc to the English commanders, summoning them in God's name to be gone from the soil of France. The enforced absence of the king from Paris and his wanderings in the south made the Government appear more universal, less local than before. 2. The disaster of Agincourt was a severe blow to the nobility. 8000

[4] The French were the less anxious to secure Calais, because, had they done so, they were bound by treaty to hand it over to the Duke of Burgundy.

gentlemen were slain, many others ruined by heavy ransoms; and the disgrace was even more fatal than their material losses to the aristocracy, for their incapacity to govern or to protect the country had been conspicuous, and feudalism ceased henceforth to be a force rivalling the royal authority.[5] As we have already remarked, men of the upper middle class (as they would now be called) predominated in the Council of Charles VII. 3. The conquered provinces were united immediately to the domains of the Crown, and increased the power and wealth of the sovereign, while the successful conduct of the war, and the vigour with which for a time his advisers succeeded in inspiring the king, commanded respect and popularity. 4. The war had compelled the organisation of the military forces of the country, and had led the people to acquiesce in the establishment of permanent taxes levied without the consent of the Estates. The Government was therefore not only victorious, but far better prepared and equipped for the second and not less arduous struggle which was already inevitable.

France and Burgundy.—Philip,[6] Duke of Burgundy, Brabant, Lotrich, Luxemburg, and Limburg, Count of Flanders, Artois, Hainault, Holland, Zealand, Namur, and Charolais, Palatine of Burgundy (Franche Comté), Marquis of the Holy Roman Empire, Lord of Friesland, Mechlin, &c., ruled over dominions which equalled in extent and surpassed in wealth and population the most powerful kingdoms. His Court was the most splendid of Christendom,

[5] This may seem to need explanation. What remained of feudalism was still powerful enough to be a dangerous antagonist when allied with other enemies of the Crown, *e.g.*, with the artificial oligarchy of the princes of the blood, and the virtually independent sovereigns of Burgundy and Brittany, or with a great popular movement as in the wars of religion.

[6] See genealogical table.

and it was not only frequented by all who wished to excel in chivalrous exercises, or study the most elaborate ceremonial and stately etiquette, but it was also dignified by the presence of celebrated masters of eloquence, of painting, and of music. The Duke of Burgundy was the lord of the most wealthy and populous towns of Western Europe, cities whose manufactories and whose trade spread over the whole of the known world, and whose militia was a match for the armies of a kingdom. He could command the hardy sailors of Holland and Zealand, while the nobility of Hainault, Artois, and the two Burgundies, supplied him with a force not inferior to the feudal levies of any other prince. It is convenient to speak of an heterogeneous and nameless conglomeration of provinces as Burgundy, yet we must not forget that they had not even a name in common—their position, their language, their history, their interests, all combined to divide these fiefs which inheritance, violence, and craft had united under the dominion of the younger branch of the Valois. It is true that sometimes the hands of the rulers were strengthened by the mutual hatred of their subjects. The Hollanders were ready to take up arms against the overbearing and rebellious Flemings; the high-born nobles zealously assisted their lord to chastise the pride and arrogance of the low-born burghers. Even the three great towns of Flanders, whose united power would have been well nigh irresistible, were separated by commercial rivalry and by countless disputes of precedence and jurisdiction. If the Duke of Burgundy was formidable to the French Government as the leader of the princes of the blood, and of the few remaining great vassals, and as the support and refuge of all who were discontented and rebellious, he had scarce less reason to dread the domestic enemies upon whose help the king

could count in the event of war. Liège was the faithful ally of the French sovereign.[7] The cities of Flanders encouraged the interference of the over lord in their quarrels with their count: by acknowledging no masters they trusted to escape the necessity of serving either. The neighbouring princes of Germany regarded with distrust and alarm the prince who had appropriated Luxemburg and Hainault, and who so little respected the rights of the empire as to declare that he held his county of Holland by the grace of God alone.

Before the total expulsion of the English the attainment of "the natural boundaries of old Gaul"[8] had already occurred to French statesmen as the legitimate aim of their ambition, and the excuse of their encroachments.[8] But even a more rational and less ideal policy might seem to demand the humiliation of the aggressive power of Burgundy. The attitude of the two Governments constantly became more hostile. The Parliament of Paris stoutly maintained the supremacy of its jurisdiction in Flanders. Its officers burst open the doors of the gaols and served its writs on the Duke of Burgundy, even when seated in his utmost pride in the midst of the knights of his order, and of all the pomp and splendour of his Court. The ministers of the king asserted that although Philip had personally been excused the performance of homage, yet their master could not abandon the inalienable prerogatives of the Crown, the regalian rights and collation to benefices, the right to levy tallages and to enforce the salt monopoly in some fiefs. The deter-

[7] The Prince Bishop of Liège was of course in no sense a subject or vassal of the Duke of Burgundy.

[8] Æneas Sylvius, ep. 87, "Non nullis autem se velle vindicare jura domus Franciæ asseverabat *quæ usque ad Rhenum* protendi dicebat," perhaps the rights of the kings of France as representing the Carlovingians, but then why not much further than the Rhine?

mination of the advisers of Charles VII. to lose no opportunity of striking a blow at Burgundy had been sufficiently shown when they took advantage of the revolt of Ghent in 1452 to demand the unconditional restitution of the towns which had been ceded to Philip by the treaty of Arras. Yet no actual rupture occurred during the life of Charles VII. Neither he nor the Duke of Burgundy was anxious to begin a long and doubtful struggle. The natural indolence of the king, perhaps a more worthy disinclination to disturb the quiet which his country so greatly needed, and a just horror of a war in which it seemed likely that the Dauphin and the Count of Charolais would be the allies of their fathers' enemies, prevented him from listening to the suggestions of the Count of Dammartin and of other advisers, who were the eager advocates of a more energetic policy.

Philip of Burgundy indulged meantime in dreams of glory and conquest to be won in a new crusade against the triumphant and dreaded Turks. The fall of Constantinople in the spring of 1453, the heroic death of the last Constantine on the walls of his capital, and the avowed intention of the conqueror not to rest till he was master as well of the old as of the new Rome, filled Europe with grief and dismay. The princes of the West appeared to repent that they had grudged the moderate and easy help sufficient to have saved a city, so long the bulwark of the young and divided nations of Christendom in the days when the sword and zeal of Islam were most formidable. The theatrical ambition of Philip caught fire at the prospect of appearing before the world as the leader of the hosts of Christendom, and perhaps as the sovereign of a new and Catholic empire of the East. He invited his paladins, the Knights of the Golden Fleece, to a splendid and fantastic feast at Lille, in the course of which he and

all the warriors present swore by the Virgin and the ladies, by God and the pheasant, to engage in a holy war against the Turks.

But besides his desire to carry out this pious and chivalrous enterprise, there were other reasons which disposed the duke to bear with patience the encroachments and pretensions of the French Court.

Lewis XI. as Dauphin.—The Dauphin was his dutiful nephew and pensioner, and after the king's death Philip might hope to govern France in the name of the grateful and humble guest who would owe the crown to his friendship. The impatient activity of the Dauphin, in this respect so different from his father, his love of power and restless subtlety of intellect, had from the first involved him in disputes with the ministers of Charles VII. He apparently thought that if the king would not himself govern, his son was the fittest person to exercise the royal authority. The hope of driving his father's advisers from the position they held, and of substituting himself in their place, was probably the motive which led him to join the princes in the revolt of 1440. After his submission, the king and his council endeavoured to satisfy his restless ambition by giving up to him the government of his appanage Dauphiny, which he administered as an independent prince with vigour and intelligence, and by entrusting him from time to time with important commands, in which he acquitted himself with great courage and conduct. In 1443 he was appointed governor of the countries between the Seine and the Somme, and led an army with success against the English, who were besieging Dieppe; and in the next year he was sent against the Count of Armagnac, who, offended and alarmed by the interference of Charles VII. in the disputes of the southern barons, and by the growing authority of the

Crown, had entered into an alliance with the English which he hoped to cement by the marriage of his daughter to Henry VI. His dominions were overrun by Lewis in a short campaign, and he himself compelled to surrender. When the truce which accompanied the marriage of Margaret of Anjou and the King of England (1444) exposed the country to the violence and robberies of the unemployed mercenaries, the French Government determined to employ the dangerous bands in two expeditions. One, under the immediate command of the king, was to extend French influence in the direction of the Rhine, by compelling the bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun to transfer their homage from the Empire to the Crown of France; the other was to assist the Austrians and the barons of Swabia against their bold and aggressive neighbours, the Swiss Cantons—then known as the League of Upper Germany. The Dauphin was appointed to command this second force, a formidable army, not of French only, but also of English and Normans eager to share in the plunder and licence of the campaign. They advanced as far as Basel, and in the sight of the fathers of Christendom who were still sitting in that city, fought an obstinate and bloody battle with the Swiss on the banks of the Birse, a tributary of the Rhine. 1600 Swiss were slain, overwhelmed by numbers, and overcome "less by their enemies than by the fatigue of victory." The French and English captains declared, that never in their long experience had they seen men sell their lives so dearly. Lewis and his army were glad to conclude a treaty with such poor and hardy opponents, and to plunder the fertile territory of their allies on both banks of the Rhine.

The Dauphin and his father had lived in apparent harmony for six years, but in 1446 they parted never to

meet again. The Dauphiness Margaret of Scotland, whose gentle grace and lovable character enabled her to mediate between her husband and the king, died in 1445; about the same time the influence of the wisest councillors of Charles VII., of the Constable Richemont and of James Cœur, appears to have been yielding to that of Peter de Brézè and of Antony de Chabannes, Count of Dammartin, who were perhaps not inferior in insight and statecraft, but whose policy seems to have been interested and often mischievous. And Lewis, so far from attempting to conciliate his father, offended him on the most delicate point by the scant courtesy he showed to Agnes Sorel, who, since the death of Yolande of Aragon, kept a state far surpassing that of his mother, the neglected Mary of Anjou. The king was prepared to entertain any charge against his son, when Dammartin disclosed a plot formed by the Dauphin to seize the royal person and possess himself of the government. There is no reason to suppose that Lewis would have shrunk from such an attempt, or that his subtle intellect would have failed to justify it to his conscience. Had not Richemont more than once torn his sovereign by violence out of the hands of unworthy favourites? and had not his vigour been justly praised by the nation and condoned by the king? Yet it seems strange that Lewis should have chosen as his confidant one of the very men against whom he was plotting. However this may be, the informer was believed. Some of the Scotch archers of the guard were executed, and others of the Dauphin's adherents fled the country. He, however, maintained his innocence, and was allowed to retire into Dauphiny. Neither the threats nor the entreaties of his father could persuade him again to appear at Court, unless the king would consent to banish those of his ministers whom he considered his

most dangerous enemies. He was again accused of plotting to subvert the Government in 1448, and though the charge was afterwards proved to be false, it had been supported by Brézè and other courtiers. He maintained, not unreasonably, that only those who had determined he should never reign would dare to persecute the heir to the throne with such malignant hostility. Some false accusation might be brought against him, and his arrest ordered. Once in prison, and in the hands of his enemies, he felt that neither the affection nor the vigilance of the king would protect him from their malice, although his apathy might secure their impunity. He therefore continued to live like an independent sovereign in his appanage; he concluded treaties and declared war; founded a parliament at Grenoble, a university at Valence, encouraged trade and agriculture, and carried on his Government with great administrative ability,[2] although his subjects groaned under the taxes he was compelled to impose in order that he might maintain an army disproportioned to his dominions, and carry out the schemes suggested by his busy brain. He further displeased his father by marrying, in spite of his prohibition, Charlotte of Savoy[1] (1451), a princess whose dowry was considerable, and the alliance of whose father was valuable to Lewis, from the position of his dominions, and from his friendly relations with the Swiss League.

Dammartin and his friends urged the king to punish this disobedience; but the revolt of Gascony compelled his attention. The Dauphin offered to employ his army and the fortune of his bride in its reduction, but this proposal

[2] When he was expelled, the inhabitants begged that the administration might be carried on as he had ordered it.

[1] Daughter of Lewis, second Duke of Savoy, and of Anne of Lusignan, titular Queen of Cyprus—dethroned by her natural brother James.

was curtly rejected. At length, in 1456, the king approached the frontiers of Dauphiny with a large army. Lewis repeated his protestations of submission and affection, and his refusal to visit his father while the latter was surrounded by men whom he considered unscrupulous enemies.[2] But his subjects were slow to arm in his support, and he felt that his position was full of danger; he wearied his favourite saints with vows, and loaded them with offerings.

Exile of the Dauphin.—At length, hearing that his great enemy Dammartin was entering Dauphiny at the head of an army, he fled with the utmost precipitation, accompanied by only seven attendants, across the mountains to St Claude, in Franche Comté; whence he wrote that at the request of the Pope he was on his way to join his uncle of Burgundy in the crusade against the Turks. The Duke of Burgundy ostentatiously welcomed the heir of his sovereign with every demonstration of respect, bestowing on him the castle of Genappe for his residence, and a pension of 30,000 crowns for his support. There was nothing in which his future sovereign might not command him, but when Lewis asked to be assisted with an army against his father's ministers he was refused. Repeated embassies were sent by the duke, entreating Charles VII. to pardon his son, but as the king constantly professed his readiness to do so if Lewis would return to his Court, while he rejected the conditions which the latter considered indispensable to his safety, all such efforts were futile.

The Dauphin employed five years (1456-1461) of exile

[2] It was in this year that the Duke of Alençon was arrested and found guilty of high treason for corresponding with the English, &c. Lewis was said to have been implicated in his guilt. It is likely that at any rate he had corresponded with him as with other malcontents at his father's court.

with profit in the careful study of the nature, the strength and the weakness, of the power against which he was to wage so long a struggle, and in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the men who would be his enemies or his instruments. "My cousin of Burgundy," said Charles VII., "is sheltering the fox that will eat his chickens." Lewis had the skill to remain on good terms with both the parties which divided the Court of Burgundy. The Duke Philip was almost as completely under the influence of the Croï, as Charles of France was under that of his favourites. While the Count of Charolais was not less eager for power, and impatient of the authority of his father's advisers, than the Dauphin. His discontent was encouraged by Lewis de Luxemburg, Count of St. Pol, who was tempted by the position of his extensive domains, and the promptings of an intriguing and ambitious disposition, to treat with and betray in turn all parties which divided the Courts of France and Burgundy; and the majority of the nobility were jealous of the rapid rise of the Croï, a family but recently purified from the reproach of trade. Antony de Croï had been the companion of Philip's boyhood, the favourite attendant and confidant of his manhood, and was now the director of his old age. Although obstinate and passionate, the duke was said to be guided in all matters by the advice of his favourite. But whether the power of Croï was as absolute as was pretended by his enemies or not, he had certainly obtained from the partiality of his master possessions and offices which rendered him a dangerous opponent even to Charolais himself;[3] and he was hateful to St. Pol as his rival or superior in power in those very districts where his ambition trusted to establish an independent principality.

[3] He was Governor of Namur, Luxemburg, and Limburg; and his brother John de Croï, Lord of Chimay, was Governor of Hainault.

Charolais caused the King of France to be sounded as to the help or countenance he might expect in case he endeavoured to force his father to discard these obnoxious favourites. Charles VII. peremptorily rejected the suggestion. While giving him credit for not wishing to encourage in another the undutiful conduct he deplored in his own son, we may remark that the government of Philip was popular among the bulk of his subjects, and that an attempt to overthrow it would have met with little support; that the presence of the Dauphin at his court supplied him with a powerful weapon in case of a rupture; and that the Croï had ever been more disposed than their adversaries to favour the interests of France.

Lewis was apparently only anxious to deserve the blessing which is promised to the peacemakers. He behaved with the same affection to Charolais as to the duke, though he lavished on the latter his most glowing expressions of gratitude and devotion. When the Dauphiness bore a son at Genappe,[4] Philip consented to be godfather, and during the ceremony his guest, uncovering himself before him, protested that he could only show his gratitude by devoting himself, his wife, and his child to the service of his dear uncle. While a short time before, Lewis had himself been godfather to the daughter of Charles of Burgundy—the child whom his policy afterwards sought to strip of her inheritance.

Death of Charles VII.—Towards the end of his life Charles VII. appears to have desired to be reconciled with his heir.[5] But the resentment of Lewis outweighed his affection; or rather, he appears to have been free from either emotion, and to have listened only to the prompt-

[4] The child only lived a few months.

[5] The Pope, Pius II., whom he is said to have consulted, dissuaded him from any attempt to change the succession.

ings of his cold and suspicious intellect. He attempted to ruin Dammartin, whom he feared most, by sending a letter, which spoke of him as his secret ally in such a manner that it should be intercepted and carried to the king. Another letter, and one that was genuine, was seized, written by Mme. de Villequier, the royal mistress, in which she sought to make her peace with the future king. Charles VII. was now fifty-eight, a considerable age for a mediæval prince. He was worn out by a life of debauchery, and in no condition to support the apprehension caused by such evidence of treachery in those who should have been most faithful. For the first time traces of his father's and his nephew's malady began to be noticed; he suspected poison in every dish; an abscess which had formed in his mouth he regarded as a proof that some had already been administered. He refused all food, even when previously tasted in his presence by his younger son, and when an attempt was made to force nourishment upon him, it was already too late. (July 1461.)

Such was the miserable death of Charles "the Victorious," a prince who was seen to exert under compulsion some of the qualities of a great ruler; but indolent and without ambition, delighting in a life of private ease and debauchery, he seems to have hated those who constrained him in spite of himself to use his higher faculties, or at least—for hate was a passion too violent for his apathetic nature—to have gladly acquiesced in their ruin.

His reign occupied thirty-nine years in a century of change and transition. It would be difficult to say whether we should most rightly include it in mediæval or in modern history, if we were unfortunately compelled to break history up into sharp and arbitrary divisions. The fall of Constantinople, which led to the rapid spread of

the learning which had languished in the schools of Byzantium, when transplanted to the freer air of Italy, and the termination of the long struggle of the English for dominion on the Continent, have led many to choose the year 1453 as marking the beginning of a period in the world's history; while others have fixed upon the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. as the event which most nearly fell in with the end of the Middle Ages, "since," in the words of Mr. Hallam, "that invasion brought the nations of Europe into relations of hostility and alliance to each other, which may be deduced to the present day." But before we can attempt to say when the Middle Ages ended, we must have some clear conception of what we mean by the Middle Ages. Perhaps, it might be replied, the time when feudalism prevailed. Feudalism, from one point of view, was the system which made the owner of a piece of ground the sovereign of those who dwelt upon it; but this would be a most imperfect definition; for it was also a legislative, judicial, military, and religious system, which united the possessors of fiefs among themselves, and formed them into a whole, embracing the whole Christian world, of which on earth the Emperor and the Pope were the equal or rival heads. Every man owes service and protection—service to his lord, protection to his vassal; except that, at the one extreme God, of whom Emperor and Pope hold the temporal and spiritual dominion of the world, owes only protection, while, at the other extreme, the villein owes only service. Such was the feudal ideal of society, an ideal which could not be realised, but which exercised no small influence over the minds of men, and which shaped the policy of many great rulers, from Charles the Great to Innocent III., although obscured, in the case of the Emperors, by the traditions of Roman

absolutism; in the case of the Popes, by the wish to establish a theocratic despotism. Many anarchical tendencies, and many irreconcilable elements of society, struggled against feudalism from the first. During the thirteenth century they continually gathered strength, and allied themselves with newer and more formidable, because more progressive forces. The harmony between the moral and the intellectual interests and aspirations of the mediæval world gradually broke up, and already, in the thirteenth century, we can trace the ever-growing conflict between authority and reason, between theology and science. The new world, says a French historian,[6] began about the year 1300, and it first presents itself to us under the odious form of Philip the Fair, the persecutor of Christ in the person of his Vicar, the destroyer of the temple, the object of Dante's fiercest hate.[7] Philip the Fair is indeed no bad type of the selfish and cynical statecraft of the next two centuries, which were to witness the gradual destruction or decay of the old forces of society. The Empire and the Papacy were powerless and degraded; while the vision of a Christian commonwealth faded away, to disclose isolated and suspicious monarchies, connected only by alliances based on common jealousy. At the same time, the constitutional checks of the feudal system, the liberty and personal independence it had encouraged, disappeared before the encroachments of despotism; nor can this be lamented, for that liberty and that independence had degenerated into anarchy and oppression; while order, no matter how obtained, was the necessary condition of the development of modern civilisation. Nevertheless, it is

[6] M. Michelet, Hist. de France, vol. vi.

[7] See Purgatory, canto xx.

a serious drawback to our interest in the history of this period (the fourteenth, and especially the fifteenth century), that we can have so little sympathy with the aims to which the efforts of the most enlightened statesmen are directed. The feudal ideal is far more attractive than the narrow absolutist theories of the lawyers who supported the pretensions of Philip the Fair, of Charles V., or of Lewis XI. The reign of the latter was indeed a continuous battle for unity of power and social equality, things not in themselves very admirable, and whose value, at the most, is negative; nor was he scrupulous how that battle was fought. But in his encouragement of provincial institutions, in his care for the interests of commerce and agriculture, in his liberal grants of municipal privileges, and in his apparent sympathy with the sufferings of the lower classes, he sometimes appears to have foreseen, and to have attempted to guard against some of the mischievous tendencies of the centralised despotism he so untiringly laboured to establish.

Peaceful Succession of Lewis.—The news of his father's death reached Lewis at Hesdin; he is said to have received it with a smiling countenance, and to have rewarded the messenger. His first care was to inform the Duke of Burgundy, whom he invited to accompany him to his coronation at Rheims: he was as yet uncertain whether he might not require the duke's assistance against the men who had pursued him with such persistent enmity during his father's life. But the Council of Charles VII. had abandoned, before his death, all hope of effecting a change in the succession, and now eagerly sought to make their peace, choosing as a scapegoat the Count of Dammartin, whose hostility to the Dauphin had been most marked, and with whose ruin or death they trusted his resentment might be satisfied. Protestations

of submission or loyalty poured in from all quarters. The Duke of Burgundy summoned his vassals to assemble at St. Quentin, and sent the Lord of Croï to assure Lewis that he would meet him at Cologne, and conduct him to Rheims at the head of 100,000 men. Now that all fear of resistance to his authority was passed, the king did not wish to appear to owe his crown to the patronage of Burgundy. Perhaps it was not so much that he disliked the appearance, for of appearances he was ever careless, and he showed himself ready to lavish every possible mark of gratitude and dependence on the vain-glorious Philip; as because he could not have neglected or slighted the admonitions of the leader of so many thousands. For, willing as he was to receive the advice of his benefactor with apparent gratitude and respect, he intended only so far to follow it as might accord with his own policy.

What need was there, he asked the Lord of Croï, of such an army? "My fair uncle ought not to fear any one, since he is with me and I with him. What! am I not king? Of whom need he be afraid?" The damage that would have been done by the passage of so numerous a body of troops was made the ground for begging Philip to content himself with the attendance of his usual suite and of his most considerable vassals. Even then he was followed by more than 4000 men-at-arms to Avesnes, where he joined his guest: then pushing on, he entered Rheims a day before the king. His splendour and magnificence are complacently enlarged upon by the Burgundian chroniclers; nor does anything appear to have been omitted which could contribute to make the coronation day of Lewis the happiest in the life of his vain and ostentatious benefactor. By order of the king, the keys of the city were presented to him by the archbishop, who received him with an eloquent address, taking for his

text the Scripture, "Domine, in virtute tuâ lœtabitur rex," and assuring him that he had been the salvation of king and country. The archbishop was answered with equal eloquence and taste by the Bishop of Tournai. The hospitality of Philip to the Dauphin was compared to that shown by Zacchæus to our Lord. The Burgundian courtiers did not fail to admire and exalt the humility and loyalty of their master, who was contented to be compared to a publican and sinner entertaining his Saviour. During the ceremony of the coronation, when the king, anointed with the miraculous oil and clothed in the royal robes, was led to a throne of twenty-seven steps, and there sat in glory and majesty, the other prelates and princes fell a little back, excepting only the Duke of Burgundy, the premier peer, who, when he had placed the cap on the king's head, took the rich and precious crown, and lifting it on high in both hands, so that it might be seen of all, supported it for some little time above his head, and after this had been done, placed it very gently on his brow, crying in a loud voice, "Long live the king, Montjoie St. Denis!"[8] Lewis also condescended to receive the honour of knighthood from the duke, "though hitherto it had been held that the sons of the kings of France become knights at the baptismal font."[9]

After having displayed his magnificence and his power, Philip wished to show that he possessed, in like degree, the knightly virtues of Christian charity and loyalty. He fell upon his knees before the king, and besought him to pardon and maintain in their offices his father's ministers and advisers, the men who had so greatly wronged them both,—good advice, which he probably neither hoped nor expected would be followed. He then

[8] Chastellain, p. 141.

[9] Monstrelet.

did homage for the fiefs which he held of the Crown of France, and further promised obedience and service for all his other lands. From Rheims the king proceeded to Meaux, and thence to St. Denis, where he stopped to pray at his father's tomb, and, we are told, "wept very bitterly."

The King and the Duke of Burgundy at Paris.—The Duke of Burgundy separated from him at Meaux, and reached Paris on the 30th of August. Lewis entered the city on the next day; he was accompanied and welcomed by a most brilliant cavalcade. All the authorities of the city, of the Parliament, and of the university; all the great princes and nobles were present, with the exception of the King of Sicily, his brother the Count of le Maine, the Duke of Brittany, and the Count of Foix, and vied with each other in the splendour of their dress and appointments. Contemporary descriptions of their fantastic and extravagant magnificence explain and excuse the contempt for the fashions of the time, which the acute and practical intellect of Lewis cared not to conceal. The preparations of the municipality of Paris were equal to the occasion. We read of fountains flowing with milk and wine, and hippocrass; of all manner of allegorical personages; of ladies representing Justice and Equity, the letters of the name of the city, and the like; of naked sirens reciting airs and pastorals; of English having their throats cut, and of other dramatic representations. A month was spent in festivities, in which the splendour and generosity of the Duke of Burgundy were conspicuous. He kept open house, and treated all comers with the same magnificence. The Burgundian chronicler says that his courtesy won all hearts. Happy, exclaimed the citizens, the people who have such a prince; while duty alone led the nobles to pay that respect to the king

which their affection freely tendered to the duke. The king did not indeed attempt to court popularity by vying with Philip in magnificence and lavish hospitality. Even if he had possessed the means and the inclination, his attention was distracted by more important cares. One incident deserves mention, since it illustrates his cynical humour, and the estimation in which he held the theatrical chivalry of the fifteenth century. At a great tournament, after the Count of Charolais and other great nobles had paraded and tilted in their purple and plumes and gilded armour, a champion appeared, roughly covered with the skins of wild beasts, who rode down the glittering knights one after the other. He had been sent by Lewis, perhaps in conscious symbolism of the overthrow he was plotting against the degenerate and corrupt feudalism which masqueraded in the trappings of chivalry.

Although lavish of professions of gratitude and of submission to the Duke of Burgundy, the king in no way troubled himself to follow his advice; yet his presence was a source of embarrassment and annoyance. Lewis announced that he intended to visit his mother, the Dowager Mary of Anjou, who was living at Amboise, and proceeded to the Hôtel d'Artois to bid farewell to Philip. The duke, hearing of his approach, received him on his knees in the middle of the street, and was raised with the most exaggerated expressions of affection and gratitude. A few days afterwards Philip left Paris to return to Brussels. When he was well out of the city, the keys of the Bastille were brought to him by the king's orders,—a mark of confidence so derisory, that it can scarcely have served to dissipate his discontent. Never, he said, had a man been so befooled by fine professions. Nor were his followers better pleased; they had hunted, dined, and joked with the exiled Dauphin.

Doubtless, as his manner was, he had been prodigal of promises, they had hastened to Paris in the hope of sharing the spoil, and now returned poorer than they had come. Nor was their disappointment decreased by the many favours which Lewis had heaped on the Croï, to whom, as it appeared, he would refuse nothing.

The Policy and Difficulties of Lewis.—Although, after the departure of his benefactor, the king might feel more completely his own master, yet, from the moment of his accession he had exercised his authority with activity and decision. We shall see that his domestic policy, though more vigorous and impatient, was a continuation of that which had been approved by the wisest advisers of the late reign: that in his dealings with foreign powers he was prudent and successful, and that even his enemies had no reason to complain of injustice and severity. Yet in four years he alienated the affections of almost all classes, and his throne would have been overthrown amid the hostility or indifference of his subjects, had it not been saved by his great ability, never so active and conspicuous as in the midst of danger, by the growing strength of an organised government, and by the errors and divisions of his opponents.

The return of an exiled prince must naturally awaken hopes and apprehensions dangerous to the future tranquillity of his reign. His enemies will regard even his clemency with suspicion, while his utmost bounty will fail to satisfy the exigencies of his friends. But Lewis had even greater difficulties against which to contend. He had no supporters, no party of his own in the kingdom. He had conspired with the princes against his father, and in great measure owed his crown to the Duke of Burgundy, whom they considered their leader. Yet even when Dauphin he had shown how little he sympathised with them, as king

he was unavoidably their enemy. His character seems at first to have been little appreciated, but enough was known to render it highly improbable that he would be content to be the nominal head of a confederacy of rival and independent princes, and to console himself by the splendour of his court for the loss of all real power. The populace had welcomed their new king with extravagant joy. It was understood that all taxes were to be abolished. Philip the Good had besought his nephew to pity the sufferings and alleviate the burden of the poor people, while his friends and relatives sturdily begged for pensions and gifts. When it was found that if anything taxation was increased under the new reign, riots broke out in various parts of the country, at Rheims, at Alençon, at Angers, and Aurillac. But by none were the earliest indications of the king's intentions more carefully scanned than by the men who had directed the councils and commanded the armies of the late king. There is little doubt that Lewis might have conciliated them without oppressing his people or abandoning his projects. That this would have been his wisest course he afterwards acknowledged. He was not such a master as they would have chosen; but he was their king, and their position and their fortunes were too dependent on the royal favour for them to refuse him their services. That in some cases he refused these services has been generally attributed to his resentment; he may also have been influenced by other motives. His father had been governed, he intended to govern. If he simply accepted the administration as it stood, he would be fettered on all sides. Even if his strong will and eager persistency were powerful enough fully to impose his policy on his ministers, he yet would lose the credit of independent judgment and initiative, and he seems to have wished that it should be generally known that "one horse carried the king and

all his council." In short, he wished to continue the work that had been begun, but to continue it himself, or by means of men who were content to be merely his instruments. It seems but reasonable to suppose that he also felt some natural desire to requite those from whose hostility he had so long suffered. If this be so we cannot deny him the praise of extreme moderation in revenge. Dammartin had denounced him to his father, had driven him from the Court, and had endeavoured to seize his person at a time when Lewis considered captivity equivalent to a sentence of death. He himself despaired of pardon. None of his friends dared to intercede for him; two only would receive the faithful servant who had consented to visit the Court on his lord's behalf. For nearly two years he remained in hiding, but when it became known that, whatever Lewis might be, he at any rate was no bloodthirsty and vindictive tyrant, his old enemy obtained access to his presence, and threw himself at his feet. "Do you beg for justice or mercy?" asked the king. "Justice, sire." "Then I banish you from the kingdom, and give you 1,500 crowns to take you to Germany." But Dammartin preferred to surrender to the Governor of Maçon, and to stand his trial before the Parliament of Paris, hoping thus to save some of his goods and estates, which had been sequestrated and placed under the administration of Charles of Melun, the high steward, who at once appropriated the movables, and endeavoured to procure the conviction of the accused; while the heirs of James Cœur demanded the restitution of their father's estates, so scandalously seized by Dammartin. He was finally sentenced by the Parliament to perpetual banishment in the island of Rhodes, but as he could not find the required suretics not to leave his place of exile, he was imprisoned in the Bastille. Except Dammartin none of his father's favourites was more

obnoxious to Lewis than the able and versatile Peter de Brézè, Count of Maulevrier, grand seneschal of Normandy. After the death of Charles VII. he ventured to approach the new king, but Lewis refused to receive him, and ordered him to retire to his estates. Nor would he have escaped further punishment had it not been for the intercession of Antony de Croï, to whom no favour was refused. Shortly afterwards he allowed himself to be arrested, and after a brief confinement at Loches was pardoned. A year later the king made his entry into Rouen with De Brézè by his side. The Chancellor William Jouvenal, Archbishop of Rouen, was dismissed. He was succeeded by Peter de Morvilliers, a clerical councillor of parliament. This appointment excited much surprise, for Morvilliers was under trial for receiving a bribe from both parties to a suit. He presented himself boldly before the king. Chastellain graphically describes the interview. "Are you not he," said Lewis, "that is indicted for such and such offences?"—"Yes, Sire."—"And what do you expect? are you confident of the issue!"—"I have great confidence in God and my good case."—"Would you not agree to an arrangement?"—"Sire, I desire nothing but justice and fair sentence."—"And if I were to offer you my good grace, would you not accept it?"—"Sire, I desire your good grace, without which I cannot live, but in this matter I require no favour."—"What! here in this bag is your case and your indictment, and you desire no favour, and do not wish me to cancel anything?"—"Sire, I wish for no favour, nor for anything but justice."—Then the king, seeing his constancy and his great firmness of speech, gazed upon him admiringly, and pausing somewhat on the first word, said: "I appoint you Chancellor of France; be upright." The conduct of Louis in raising Morvilliers to so high an office has generally been commented upon

unfavourably. It is regarded as a proof of his deficiency in moral sense, and of his admiration of unscrupulousness in others. But Morvilliers had already, by his ability, raised himself to an important position, and his conduct on this occasion is at least more consistent with innocence than with guilt. Many other changes were made, partly in favour of his companions of exile, partly in that of some of his Burgundian friends. He also meddled with the constitution of the Parliament of Paris, and of other courts of justice. In every important office Lewis endeavoured to place men who were bound to him by the largest liberality or by the forgiveness of former offences, or who felt that their position was due to his favour rather than to their merits, and that he who had raised them could alone maintain them at so artificial an height.

The Character of the King.—In the beginning of his reign, Lewis seems to have believed in gratitude as a means of securing his servants' fidelity. This delusion was rudely dispelled; and though he continued to be lavish in his gifts to those whom he wished to gain or reward, the severity with which he punished traitors such as Balue, and the long-brooded vengeance which overtook St. Pol and Nemours, seem to show that he trusted as much in the fear as in the affection which he sought to inspire. There is not, as far as I know, any instance in his life of aimless and wanton cruelty; there is none perhaps of spontaneous and uncalculating generosity. He never allowed his passions to blind him to his interests. Yet he was possessed by much of the restless eagerness of a revolutionary leader. No sooner had he attained one object, than he pressed on to the next; or rather, till severely taught by experience, he seems to have striven to attain all ends at once. The same nervous restlessness involved him in many troubles. No man was more capable

of conciliating an enemy or of extricating himself from a dangerous position, but no man in prosperity was more reckless of giving offence or of involving himself in needless embarrassments: a peculiarity apparently as inconsistent with his natural caution, as his heedless loquacity and freedom of speech was inconsistent with his habitual dissimulation. He prided himself greatly upon his tact and skill in eliciting the opinions and discovering the secrets of those with whom he conversed. But while talking freely himself to encourage the confidence of others, he frequently gave them the advantage he himself sought to obtain. The same overweening trust in his own address and dexterity led him ever to prefer a tortuous to a straightforward policy. He was apt to make the most extravagant promises to obtain a slight present advantage, since he doubted not that he would be able to devise some means or pretext of evasion. The only thing on which he prided himself was on being more subtle, more cunning, and more free from prejudices than other men. He was wont to say, that "when pride rides before, shame and loss follow behind."—Hence his ostentatious disregard of all display, even of that which seemed requisite to maintain the dignity of his position. Nor did he disdain to flatter and cajole the humblest of his subjects, if he believed them in any way capable of doing him an injury or a service. In war he showed considerable judgment, and he possessed that cool and deliberate courage which is one of the most necessary qualities of an able general. Yet he preferred to attain his ends by craft rather than by force, fearing to stake the success of his fine-spun schemes on the uncalculable chances of a pitched battle. We shall see that he was not more faithless or more cruel than the other princes of his age, and that his perfidy and cruelty were perhaps excused in his own sight by the beneficial

and public ends for which they were employed. He was disliked by his countrymen alike for his vices and his great qualities, which were equally repellent to them. His impatience and vivacity were French, but in every other respect he resembles the great Italian statesmen, the Viscontis and the Sforzas, the models of "The Prince" of Macchiavelli. Indeed, he declared himself the disciple of Francis Sforza, and one of the first acts of his reign was to send secretly for two Venetian nobles, who were to initiate him into the policy of that astute and despotic aristocracy.

In considering that portion of the reign of Lewis XI. which preceded the "War of the Public Good," we must endeavour to keep clearly before us the main objects of his policy, which were—1. To weaken the power of the feudal princes by attacking their prerogatives and dividing their interests. 2. To raise the power and to promote the prosperity of the third estate by the liberal concession of new privileges, and by careful attention to the interests of commerce and agriculture. 3. To recover the towns of the Somme, *i.e.*, to acquire at any cost a defensible frontier against Burgundy and England. 4. To obtain full freedom of action towards the north by securing himself towards the Pyrenees and the Alps. 5. To buy the support of the Court of Rome by the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction, while enforcing its provisions in the name of the old Gallican liberties whenever the interests of the Crown were at stake. 6. To conclude a satisfactory peace or truce with England.

Besides dismissing those of his father's ministers who had been most hostile to him, or whose influence he suspected, Lewis showed favour to some who had incurred the displeasure of Charles VII. While yet at Avesnes he had ordered the release of the Duke of Alençon. He was

the king's godfather, and in his youth had been the faithful companion-in-arms of Joan of Arc, yet his prompt pardon may suggest a suspicion that the assertion that Lewis had been privy to the criminal negotiations of the duke with the English was not wholly unfounded. The Count of Armagnac was also set at large. His liberation cannot be justified, but probably did not offend contemporary opinion. He had lived in shameless incest with his sister, and his licentiousness was surpassed by his perfidy and his cruelty; yet the Duke of Bourbon was willing to welcome him as a brother-in-law, and to assist his mother in forcing upon his sister a suitor whom she justly detested.

Lewis XI. and the Nobles.—It does not seem that the great nobles had any just grounds to complain of the manner in which they were treated by the king. It is true that the Duke of Bourbon was deprived of the government of Guienne, where his administration was unpopular. That prince did not hesitate to remonstrate. He had, he exclaimed, served the king's father loyally and well, but such treatment would give him little cause to love, still less to serve, Lewis. On the other hand, the county of Beaufort was given to King René, the Count of le Maine was confirmed in his places and pensions, and the king made some efforts to induce the Pope to support the Duke of Calabria in Italy, and offered the hand of his infant daughter to the duke's son, Nicholas. The Count of Foix, the most powerful noble of the south, and an influential member of the council of the late king, was propitiated by various concessions. The Count of Dunois, the celebrated Bastard of Orleans, obtained the captaincy of Melun and afterwards of Savona. Charles of France, the king's brother, had been left unprovided for by his father; the duchy of Berri was assigned as his appanage,

an alienation of the royal domain which provoked the remonstrances of the Parliament.

From Amboise Lewis went to Tours, where he was visited by the Count of Charolais. The greatest attentions were paid to the count in all places through which he passed. The king treated him with the utmost confidence, and loaded him with honours, and with more substantial benefits. A pension of 30,000 francs, the Hôtel de Nesle at Paris, the government of Normandy, the richest and most important province of the kingdom, seemed too slight a recognition of his deserts. Charles lost his way out hunting. Lewis was beside himself with anxiety; he gnawed the staff he held in his hands, and vowed neither to eat nor drink till he had tidings of his dear brother. An accident to the Count of Charolais would indeed have been fatal to the reputation of his host. But Francis of Brittany was coming to pay such homage for his duchy as he deigned, and the departure of Charolais was hurried. The Normans, he was assured, were anxiously waiting to do honour to their new governor. Lewis greatly dreaded a meeting between Charles of Burgundy and the Duke of Brittany; he knew that a treaty between them had already been discussed, and he trusted apparently to sow dissension between them, by appointing the latter his lieutenant in all countries between the Seine and the Loire during his approaching visit to the south, thus bestowing upon him an authority which conflicted with that of the Governor of Normandy.

Abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction.—Before leaving Normandy, Lewis acted his part in an unprofitable comedy. He declared that his conscience was grievously oppressed by the guilt which he and his people incurred by observing the Pragmatic Sanction;[1] exhibited a bull

[1] The Pragmatic Sanction of Charles VII. promulgated as a royal

of Pius II. annulling it, which he devoutly kissed and caused to be preserved among his treasures in a golden

ordinance those decrees of the Council of Basil which had been approved by a Synod of the Gallican Church held at Bourges. It recognised many of the principles which that party had laboured to establish who in the fifteenth century had endeavoured to substitute a Parliamentary government of the Church for the Papal despotism. The supreme authority of œcumenical councils over the Church; the necessity that such councils should be assembled every ten years. Bishops and abbots were to be freely elected by the chapters and communities, the Pope only retaining a right of veto, and the prince of recommending a candidate to the electors *sine impressione*. The Pope might only present to benefices the holders of which died or resigned at Rome. Appeals to Rome were forbidden, except in certain specified cases, unless the case had been tried before all the lower courts, and even then the appeal must be heard in the kingdom by judges appointed by the Pope. The payment of one year's revenue to the Pope on presentation to a benefice was forbidden, as also the promises of next presentations which the Papal Court was in the habit of selling. The University of Paris and the Parliament alike protested against the revocation of the Pragmatic Sanction. The envoys of the University were answered with scanty courtesy according to Chastellain—"Je n'en feray riens. Vous êtes mechants gens et de mauvaise vie . . . allez vous en, car vous ne vallez point que je me mesle de vous," p. 190. Yet shortly after, the king confirms the privileges of "nostre très-chère et amée fille première née" the University of Paris; Ordon. v. xv. p. 310. The protest of the Parliament was better received, and when the king found that he received small returns for his concessions, he encouraged his courts to render them nugatory by their enactments. The remonstrances of the Parliament on the bad effects of the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction, made shortly after the death of Pius II. (Ordon. xv. p. 193), contain an interesting summary of the rights of the Gallican Church. Among other abuses they especially object to the "graces expectatives," promises of the next presentation, a device for extracting money, "Materia machinandi in mortem alterius," and the cause of confusion and litigation. They appeal to the king's interest, since by maintaining the right of election he can provide for his servants "en recommandant notables personnes aux élisans que voulentiers compleyroient au Roy, nostre Sire." Before the Pragmatic "non pas seulement estoient molestez les gens d'église par citations en cour de Rome, mais estoient les seculiers comme fut le barbier de devant St Denys . . . qui perdit son fils en cour de Rome par peste, et depuis fut le père cité en cour de Rome *pro debitis filii*." They further dwell on the immense expenditure of their own and their friends' money by those who flock to Rome in quest of benefices "Et pour tout le fruict qu'ils emportaient c'étoit pour or du plomb, et quand cuydoient pour leurs graces estre pourveuz venoit un aultre qui apportoit une annullation,

box. It is not easy to discover the motives which led him to abolish a salutary and popular enactment. He may have hoped by such a concession to obtain from the Pope the investiture of the crown of Naples for his cousin John of Calabria, or at any rate to secure his neutrality in the war which the party of Anjou was waging against that of Ferdinand of Arragon. Though his own policy in Italy was moderate and peaceful, Lewis would gladly have seen a French dynasty established on the throne of Naples at little cost to himself. But he must have been determined to so important a step by more interested motives. The Pragmatic Sanction gave much influence to the nobility in the election of bishops, and in the collation to benefices. The king no doubt expected to control the nominations more easily when he had only to deal with the Court of Rome. A strange delusion, artfully encouraged by Pius II., who a few weeks before had written to assure him

et aucune fois se trouvoient 10 on 12 acceptans un benefice, et sur le débat qui s'en mouvoit il convenoit retourner pour plaider à Rome." Since the abolition of the Pragmatic the country had been well-nigh drained of gold. They calculated that in the time of Pius II. twenty bishoprics had been vacant, and each vacancy had been worth 6,000 crowns to the Roman Court; sixty or more great abbeys worth 2,000 crowns each; 200 other dignities worth 500 each, all these together amounting to a sum of 340,000 crowns; by the sale of next presentations to other benefices, &c., they estimated the Pope to have obtained 2,500,000 crowns, while they calculated that 200,000 per annum were drawn from the kingdom by the sale of dispensations, legitimations, privileges, indulgences, infractions of vows, &c., &c. (a curious list of the wares in which Rome dealt), and 100,000 crowns by residents at the Court of Rome who held benefices *in commendam*, an abuse against which they especially protest, their flock being "*sicut oves errantes sine pastore.*" The most pious kings have resisted Rome. "Clovis premier Roy très-chrétien, Sainct Charlemaigne, Philippe Dieu-donné, Sainct Loys," &c., &c. Throughout the reign of Lewis XI. the pretensions of Rome were admitted or repelled, according to the advantages which the king expected from the friendship of the Pope. But he rarely failed to take back with one hand what he gave with the other.

that it was to him that any who wished to obtain grace or favour from Rome must address themselves.

Journey of the King to the South.—Early in 1462 the king left Touraine to visit the southern provinces. His journey combined religion with politics; he sought out and prayed devoutly at the shrines of the most esteemed saints. Wherever he passed he confirmed and increased the immunities and privileges of religious houses and chapters. Even his dress was that of a pilgrim, coarse grey stuff, and round his neck he wore a common wooden rosary. His attendants were few, some five or six, dressed as plainly as their master, but a powerful guard followed at no great distance. We can trace his progress by the dates of his ordinances,—decrees and letters patent on the most various and minute subjects, but almost all useful and liberal. He confirmed and enlarged the charters of towns, authorised them to borrow money for works of public utility, ennobled their magistrates, exempted those who had suffered during the late war from taxation; revised and regulated the statutes of various guilds and crafts, so as to encourage and improve the manufactures of the country, and to stimulate its trade; conferred privileges on foreign merchants, *e.g.*, Lombards, Dutch, and subjects of the Hanseatic League, established fairs, regulated the currency, and protected agriculture. His activity was as extraordinary as it seems to us praiseworthy, but was little appreciated by his contemporaries. The statesmen who perhaps were capable of understanding his policy, felt little sympathy with a prince who followed no man's counsel but his own. They were not unwilling that the crown should be powerful, but wished to share in its authority. The great feudatories felt an instinctive suspicion and dislike of this king who was determined to see and inquire into everything him-

self. Even his gifts and his concessions could not disarm their antipathy. His mean dress and slender retinue insulted their splendid apparel and numerous households. His affability and condescension to men of low birth seemed a threat to those who regarded the commons as their natural enemies. Nor did he obtain the affection of those on whose behalf he laboured so indefatigably. They had not as yet learned to fear, and they were disposed to despise a king so regardless of the pomp and circumstance of royalty. The affability of a magnificent prince is more captivating to the vulgar than the familiarity of one who neglects all outward show. They could not understand a monarch who avoided all display to such a degree, that the citizens who wished to compel him to enter a town through the main street were obliged to block up the side lanes, and whose dress was more sordid than the livery of the poorest baron. Such conduct seemed, not unnaturally, to argue a mean and miserly temperament, the self-consciousness of an unkingly disposition. This might have been pardoned had the load of taxation been lightened; but this king, who apparently spent nothing, extorted more money from his subjects than his most lavish predecessors. For, as a French historian well remarks, Lewis had all the wants of a modern ruler, with the insufficient resources of a mediæval king. He had to maintain a standing army, and to expend large sums in bribes and pensions, and preferred to pay for his conquests with the money rather than with the blood of his subjects.[2]

[2] Chastellain, p. 188 and *seq.*, is amusing and instructive. He is quite unable to understand the policy of Lewis XI., or what a prince can do with money, unless he spends it on show and magnificence. The king, he says, ennobled merchants; doubtless for the sake of gain, for no one was ever so anxious to amass money, not that he had any use for it, but out of mere avarice. His meanness and extortion made him hated. With this we may compare the praise bestowed by

During his stay in Guienne he seems to have been anxious to conciliate all classes. Bordeaux, which under the late reign had not ceased to regret the rule of the English, and whose fidelity to their cause had been punished by the loss of many of its privileges, was treated with especial favour. Not only were all the charters which had been granted by previous kings of England and France confirmed, but a Parliament was established in the capital of Guienne, with jurisdiction over almost all the provinces which had formed the old duchy of Aquitaine. The partiality of Lewis for provincial Parliaments was in some respects rational and beneficial. If appeals had to be carried hundreds of miles in a country where the means of communication were few and costly, justice must often miscarry; but the Parliaments of Paris and Toulouse were not conciliated by such innovations. Not less favour was shown to the nobles than to the towns of the south. John de Foix-Grailli, Count of Candale, the last of the great Gascon barons who had maintained his allegiance to the King of England, was allowed to make his peace and to return to his native land on honourable and advantageous terms. So excessive did the generosity of the king appear that the Parliament of Toulouse refused to register his grants. The motive assigned by the king for his liberality was the near relationship of Candale to the Count of Foix. We have already seen that the Count of Armagnac was reinstated in his dominions, his kinsman James d'Armagnac, Count of La Marche, was created a peer of France and Duke of Nemours, and as such became possessed of vast domains in the centre and north of the

Commines on the king's liberality. Certainly no prince ever spent so little on himself, or so ungrudgingly for what he conceived to be the interest of the State. As M. Michelet observes, he could not find money for a new hat, but he could find 400,000 crowns to redeem the towns on the Somme.

kingdom. The bastard of Armagnac, one of the most trusted companions of the king's exile, received in addition to the county of Comminges and the governorship of Auvergne other honours, and the governorship of Guienne. Lewis apparently trusted to balance the power of the princes by exalting men on whose gratitude and loyalty he relied, to an equality with them—a dangerous expedient, since most of these new great nobles cared more for the interests of the class to which they had been raised than for those of their benefactor. The Count of Foix was also flattered by the marriage of his son Gaston to Madeleine of France, the king's sister; nor did Lewis shrink from becoming his accomplice in crime.

Lewis takes advantage of the Civil War in Catalonia to acquire Roussillon.—John of Aragon, the brother and successor of Alphonso V., had married Blanche, the daughter and heiress of Charles of Navarre. By her he had three children—Charles, Prince of Viana; Blanche, married to Henry IV. of Castile, and afterwards divorced; and Eleanore, the wife of the Count of Foix. By the marriage contract of Blanche of Navarre, and by the will of her father, it was stipulated that at her death her children were to inherit Navarre to the exclusion of their father. John, after losing his first wife, married Joan Henriquez, daughter of the Admiral of Castile, a woman of masculine courage and unscrupulous ambition. She hated the Prince of Viana as the one obstacle to the greatness of her son Ferdinand. She persuaded his father to withhold from him his inheritance, and at length drove the gentle and virtuous Charles, or his more indignant partisans, to vindicate his rights by arms. After a long struggle, in which Charles displayed moderation and uprightness, his father and stepmother violence and dissimulation, John was forced to yield by the active hostility of the Catalans and the defection

of his other subjects. He acknowledged Charles as his heir and as Lieutenant-General of Catalonia. As a security against future treachery he was compelled to engage never to enter that province without the express permission of its inhabitants. Shortly afterwards Charles of Viana died.[3] The public voice accused his stepmother of having cleared her son's path to the throne by poison. While he lived the patience of Charles had left others to lament the injustice with which he had been treated, but now his ghost was heard nightly in the streets of Barcelona, bewailing his unnatural fate, and denouncing his murderers. Blanche, the divorced Queen of Castile, whose gentle disposition and affection for her brother had secured no small share in his popularity, was now the rightful heiress of Navarre. But John had promised to secure the succession of his younger daughter Eleanore. Lewis XI., who was at this time marrying his sister to Gaston de Foix, careful of her interests, and anxious that the crown of Navarre should be worn by a French vassal, prevailed upon John of Aragon to deliver Blanche into the hands of her sister. She was imprisoned in the castle of Orthez, and shortly afterwards put to death.[4] Meantime the Catalans had arisen to avenge their prince, and were besieging the queen, whom they considered his murderess, in Gerona. Her husband vainly attempted to relieve her, and was alarmed by the declared hostility of the King of Castile. For Henry IV., although he had divorced

[3] The amiable character of Charles of Viana was little suited for a prince of the 15th century. Wherever he went his courtesy and amiability won all hearts. The crown of Naples, where he was staying at the time of Alphonso's death, and afterwards that of Sicily, was offered to him. His favourite studies were history and philosophy. He translated the ethics of Aristotle, and compiled a chronicle of Aragon.

[4] It is not certain whether Blanche was actually murdered. She herself seems not to have doubted what her fate would be. (See Mr. Prescott's "Ferdinand and Isabella," Part I. chap. ii.)

Blanche, had not ceased to support her and her brother's party. In his extremity King John applied to Lewis XI. for assistance. His request was favourably received, although the French king had previously treated with the Catalans, and encouraged them in their revolt. By aggravating the difficulties of the King of Aragon he trusted to obtain a higher price for his assistance. At an interview between the two kings at Sauveterre in Bearn, it was agreed that John should be supported by 700 French lances, and a proportionate number of archers and artillery; he was in return to deliver Cerdagne and Roussillon as security for the payment of 200,000 gold crowns within a year after the submission of Barcelona. Lewis was confident that the King of Aragon would be unable to raise such a sum, and rejoiced to have extended his dominions to the Pyrenees, a level wall of mountains which seem destined by nature [5] to be the boundary of two kingdoms. The French troops, led by the Counts of Comminges and Foix, speedily delivered Queen Joan from her dangerous situation, and compelled the submission of all Catalonia, with the exception of Barcelona and Lerida.

Lewis and England.—Lewis XI. had meantime returned to the north, where he was occupied in guarding against the hostility of the English, and endeavouring to profit by their civil dissensions. The battle of Towton in the spring of 1401, and the eager loyalty with which the Parliament recognised Edward's title in the autumn of the same year, seemed to have destroyed the last hope of the

[5] Yet throughout the Middle Ages the Catalans, Aragonese, and inhabitants of Languedoc, were intimately connected by language, culture, and politics. Even now there is less difference between the inhabitants of the northern and southern slopes of the Pyrenees than between those of some villages in the Low Countries which are scarcely separated by a ditch or a hedge.

Lancastrians. Nor did anything appear more likely than that a young and victorious monarch should seek to gratify his ambition, and to divert the attention of his subjects from a doubtful title and the odium of domestic bloodshed, by a popular expedition against the national enemy. Preparations indeed were made, and a powerful fleet assembled under the orders of the Earl of Warwick. Yet Lewis seemed but little alarmed. It is possible that he had already some understanding with Warwick, whose friendship he was from the first anxious to court. It is certain that the English fleet did not sail till Lewis had taken every precaution to render a descent impossible or disastrous. To avoid the reproach of effecting nothing, Warwick landed some soldiers near Brest, and ravaged the open country; for the Duke of Brittany had advanced money to Queen Margaret, and had proclaimed his intention of attacking the usurper.

Lewis thought he might utilise the preparations he had made to resist invasion by recapturing Calais. As this town could not be effectually besieged without a strong fleet, he asked the Duke of Burgundy to allow him the assistance of the navies of Holland and Zealand, and also that the Count of Charolais might command his army. Philip refused. He was negotiating with Edward. During an illness which attacked him after his return from Paris, the king and the citizens of London had visited the churches in procession, to pray for his restoration to health; for though connected by marriage with the house of Lancaster, he supported, or at least inclined towards the party of York. Yet all hope of regaining Calais was not lost. Margaret of England, whose energy and courage could be crushed by no disaster, had visited the king at Chinon, in the hope of persuading him to assist a royal family so nearly kin to that of France. Lewis would

gladly have seen Henry VI. firmly established on the throne of England. His peaceful disposition, his incapacity, and the influence of his wife, would have secured a satisfactory and lasting peace between the two countries; Margaret, moreover, was the bitter enemy of the Duke of Burgundy, although the Count of Charolais, whose friendship Lewis at this moment was anxious to gain, sympathised with his mother's family. But the fortunes of the White Rose were in the ascendant, and it was peace with England, not with a faction, that Lewis sought.[6] He therefore declined to give Margaret any open assistance. If he relieved the poverty of a queen and a kinswoman with a gift of 20,000 crowns, so moderate an alms would excite no reasonable complaint. But he allowed De Brézè to take the command of 2,000 men quietly enlisted in France and Brittany; and for this trifling assistance Margaret was compelled to sign away "her honour and her hopes." She promised that if ever she regained possession of Calais she would appoint a governor who should betray it into the hands of the king. The queen and her valiant knight eluded the vigilance of the English fleet, and were at first cheered by some partial successes. But they were unable to resist the far superior forces of Edward and Warwick. After many hardships and romantic adventures, De Brézè, Margaret, and 200 of their followers, succeeded in reaching the port of Sluys. Philip relieved their distress with ostentatious generosity, and enabled the queen to reach her father's duchy of Bar.

Revolt of Roussillon. Treaty of Bayonne.—Lewis

[6] Yet he forbade all intercourse between his subjects and the English, and Chastellain assures us that he also threatened to invade England. Edward IV. replied that if he desired to meet him he should soon have an opportunity to do so in France. It is certain that he publicly called Edward a rebellious subject and usurper, and tried to prevent Philip of Burgundy negotiating with him

had not the leisure to lament the failure of his designs on Calais. The King of Aragon, who hoped to regain Roussillon without the stipulated payment, encouraged the inhabitants to revolt. The king hastened to the south, and sent the Duke of Nemours with an overwhelming force to reduce Perpignan, and to relieve the French garrison which was besieged in the citadel of that town. King John was intimidated by this display of vigour, and not only desisted from all further attempts against the French, but even submitted his differences with the King of Castile to the arbitration of Lewis. The conference was held at Bayonne, and the award was probably impartial, since it pleased neither party. The King of Castile was to receive 32,000 crowns from the King of Aragon, together with the canton of Estella in Navarre. The Count and Countess of Foix complained of this alienation of part of their heritage. Lewis endeavoured to satisfy them by promising to the count the investiture of Roussillon at a more convenient season, and gave him in the meantime Carcassonne and a large district of Languedoc. The convention agreed upon at Bayonne was ratified at a meeting between Henry IV. and Lewis XI. on the banks of the Bidassoa. The latter did not succeed in conciliating the Castilians at this interview. His short coat of coarse stuff, old hat, frieze cloak, and shabby retinue, seemed to be paraded in scornful contrast to the splendour of the Spanish king and of his grandees, whose very shoes were embroidered with jewels, and to the glittering and barbaric pomp of his Moorish guard. The French, on the other hand, sneered at the mean presence and the weak understanding of Henry the Impotent, which were all the more conspicuous for the magnificence which surrounded him.

Recovery of the Towns on the Somme.—In the summer the king returned to Paris and to the northern

provinces to conduct a far more important negotiation. We have already remarked that the recovery of the towns on the Somme was one of the main objects of the endeavours of Lewis. By the treaty of Arras these towns, viz., Péronne, Roie, Montdidier, Saint-Quentin, Amiens, Corbie, and other places, had been ceded to the Duke of Burgundy as a compensation for any losses he might suffer by braving the hostility of the English. He engaged to restore them at any time on receipt of 400,000 crowns. Since the duke had chosen to treat separately with the English he had obviously no right any longer to expect indemnity from France for losses inflicted upon him by them. The Council of Charles VII. had therefore summoned him to restore the towns without any payment, but Lewis was ready to pay the stipulated sum or even more, if by so doing he could acquire the fortresses which defended his weakest frontier. This had been the chief object of the flattery and the favours he lavished upon the Count of Charolais, and of the boundless generosity with which he treated the family of Croï. But it is difficult to see why he at the same time tormented the duke by vexatious claims and aggressions, instead of adopting a conciliatory policy. Possibly, by showing his power of inflicting annoyance, he expected to induce him to purchase peace by mutual concessions. He summoned Philip to break off all negotiations with Edward IV.; he attempted to establish the "gabelle" in his dominions, and to bring his subjects under the jurisdiction of the royal courts. The President of Burgundy, a trusted servant and favourite of Philip, was thrown into prison. He was old, and such unexpected indignity caused his death. The people of Liège, the restless and inveterate enemies of Burgundy, were taken under the royal protection. But Charolais was insensible to all blandishments, and regarded the towns

on the Somme as the most valuable part of his future dominions, while the king's policy of annoyance irritated and estranged the duke, and made it impossible for the Croï and other French partisans to influence their master in his favour. John de Croï, Lord of Chimai, was sent to Paris to remonstrate with Lewis. He spoke with much freedom. "What manner of man," said the king, "is the Duke of Burgundy? Do you suppose him to be of different nature and metal to the other princes and lords of the realm?" "Yes, Sir," answered Chimai, "he is of different metal; for he supported and protected you against your father and the whole kingdom, when no other prince would have dared to do so." Lewis saw that he must change his tactics. He henceforth endeavoured in every way to conciliate Philip, and abandoning all hope of influencing Charolais, no longer hesitated to ally himself openly with his bitterest enemies.

During the Duke of Burgundy's illness in 1462, his wife and son had taken advantage of his condition to begin an attack on those of his servants and advisers whom they considered their opponents. They first made trial of their strength against a man of low origin, who had been highly advanced by the favour of the duke. He was charged with attempting the life of Charles, first by magic, then by poison, and suddenly executed by the orders of that prince, without being confronted with his accusers. John of Burgundy, Count of Étampes, the cousin and the step-son of Philip, was next attacked, at the instigation, it is said, of the Count of St. Pol. John of Étampes had been robbed of his patrimony, and was not unlikely to ally himself closely with the party who seemed not unprepared to take up arms against Charolais in the event of the duke's death. He was accused, on worthless evidence, of having, with the assistance of a black monk, fashioned

three waxen figures, which were christened with running water, while on their foreheads respectively were written the names of Lewis, Philip, and Charles, on their backs the name of Belial, and on their bellies that of John Count of Étampes. The object of these rites was to procure the favour of the King of France and of the Duke of Burgundy for the said John, and to compass the lingering death of the Count of Charolais. But Philip had rallied from his prostration, and declined to sacrifice to the vindictiveness or credulity of his son the kinsman whose inheritance he had appropriated. The Count of Étampes felt how precarious his position was, depending as it did on the failing health of an old man, and listened gladly to the overtures of Lewis, whose service he entered. New gifts were at the same time lavished on the Croï; the county of Guines, the baronies and lordships of Ardres, St. Omer, Bar-sur-Aube, Rosai, &c., were given or promised to the Lord Antony, the head of the family, who was at this time employed in negotiations with Edward IV. on behalf both of his master and of the King of France. Philip probably wished sincerely to promote an understanding between France and England. Every step towards a general pacification brought him nearer to his crusade. A truce of a year between the two countries was finally agreed upon. The magnificence of his Court and the preparations for his eastern expedition compelled Philip to impose new taxes on his subjects. General discontent was excited, and Ghent was already in arms. Lewis seized the opportunity, and insisted that the Croï should perform the service for which they had been so highly paid, and persuade the duke to consent to restore the towns on the Somme on receipt of the stipulated sum. They hesitated at first, but when they saw that Lewis began to treat with and to em-

ploy their mortal enemy St. Pol,[7] they induced their master to agree to the cession. The king exerted himself to the utmost to collect the 400,000 crowns; he borrowed deposits, compelled bishops, merchants, and courtiers to make advances,[8] and at length was able to send the 400,000 crowns to the surprised and disappointed duke. "Croï, Croï!" he exclaimed, "no man can serve two masters." The king entrusted the towns he had recovered to the care of the Count of Étampes, now Count of Nevers, by the death of his brother; and rewarded the Croï by new marks of favour. He promised to protect them against every enemy —a scarcely disguised threat to the Count of Charolais.

Divisions of the Court of Burgundy.—That prince had altogether retired from his father's Court. He asserted that he could not reside there in safety, for the impunity of Nevers was an encouragement to others to plot against his life; while the influence and the growing power of the Croï threatened even his succession. The Hollanders and Zealanders hated the Walloon favourites. He endeavoured to persuade them to transfer their allegiance to him during his father's lifetime. This intrigue was discovered, and widened the breach between the duke and his son.

The king visited Philip at his favourite residence, the castle of Hesdin (1463). He lavished all his arts of seduction to obtain the old man's confidence, and imagined himself so successful that he offered to bring the Count of Charolais to his senses and to his father's feet. Although the duke had spoken harshly about his son, and had promised not to receive him into favour without the king's

[7] It does not appear how the king temporarily gained St. Pol, who, although always ready to betray his allies, was at this time the close friend of Charolais.

[8] Contrary to the usual custom of mediæval princes, he repaid principal and interest.

knowledge and consent, he declined the insidious offer. He was still anxiously looking forward to the long meditated crusade. His delays had, he feared, provoked the illness from which he was slowly recovering. Lewis encouraged his pious zeal, because he trusted to persuade him to leave the government of his dominions in his hands or in those of his creatures, the Croï.[9] Chastellain relates that he suggested such an arrangement, and that it was only when he found the duke would not entertain his proposal that he attempted to dissuade him from so dangerous an expedition. He also vainly endeavoured to obtain by his flattery and blandishments the cession for an equivalent in money of the county of Boulogne and of the castlewicks of Lille, Douai, and Orchies, which had been granted to Philip the Bold by Charles V. If the determination of the duke to lead his knights against the Ottoman Sultan was shaken by the wise though interested advice of the king, it was again confirmed by an eloquent and skilful letter of Pius II. After announcing, at an assembly of notables held at Bruges on Christmas Day, his intention of embarking at Aigues-Mortes in the month of May, he summoned the Estates of the Low Countries to meet on the 10th of January. The Count of Charolais invited the members to visit Antwerp before proceeding to Bruges, in order that he might lay before them his troubles and perplexities. The question of the regency during the duke's absence was to be settled in their deliberations, and he professed great alarm lest it should be entrusted to his enemies. The duke was highly incensed when he heard of what he considered an encroachment on his prerogative, and forbade the members of the

[9] It is difficult to believe that he entertained so wild a hope; yet Charolais professed to have heard that his father meant to leave Holland and Zealand to the care of Edward IV., his other dominions to that of the King of France and of the Croï.

Estates to pass by way of Antwerp. But it was too late; many had already reached that city before they learnt his will. When they assembled on the appointed day at Bruges, the duke reproached them with their want of loyalty in obeying the summons of any other than their lord, and then complained of his son's undutiful conduct. The Estates humbly excused themselves, and some of their wi st and most considered members undertook to mediate between their princes. Charles was with great difficulty persuaded to come to Bruges, and to make some sort of submission and apology to the duke. He bent his knee three times, and said, "My most gracious lord and father, I have learnt that you are displeased with me. If I have in any way troubled or angered you, I humbly crave your pardon." "I know what your excuses are worth," his father replied; "be a good son to me, and I will be your good father." From Bruges Philip came to Lille (February 1464), where the King of France was awaiting him, in anxious expectation of the result of the meeting of the Estates and of the reconciliation with Charolais. He now looked forward with alarm to the possible departure of the duke, since he could not doubt that Charles would rule with absolute authority in his father's absence. He succeeded in persuading the duke to put off the crusade for another year, promising to assist him with 10,000 men, if in the meantime a lasting peace were concluded with England.[1]

Nothing came either of the crusade or of the peace. Pius II. died at Ancona, whither he had gone to take the command of an useless and disorderly rabble, who called themselves Crusaders. His zeal, address, and eloquence had failed to rouse the enthusiasm of a cold and selfish

[1] To escape the censures of the Pope, the Duke of Burgundy sent an armament of 2,000 men to the Mediterranean under the command of two of his bastards. They spent much money, wasted many lives, and effected nothing.

generation. The remorse and the fear occasioned by the fall of Constantinople were forgotten. The progress of the Turks had not answered to the terror of their first victories. The power which Scanderbeg, a paltry chieftain, had braved with impunity and success for many years could scarcely be formidable to the great princes of the West. The danger was remote and doubtful, while the risks and cost of a crusade were immediate and certain. When the news of the Pope's death reached the Court of Burgundy, Philip still spoke of joining his army at Avignon in the spring; but all felt that the obstacles which Æneas Sylvius had been unable to overcome were not likely to be surmounted after his death. In June the King of France again came to Hesdin. He had been negotiating secretly with the Earl of Warwick,[2] and had reason to hope that that nobleman would himself cross the sea and conclude a satisfactory peace, which would be cemented by the marriage of Edward IV. to one of the princesses of Savoy, the sisters of the Queen of France. Warwick, however, did not come, and the English envoys had no powers to treat about such important mattters. Lewis treated them none the less with much courtesy, and introduced them to the young ladies, among whom, he assured them, their master would do well to choose a wife. Nor was the king much more successful in his other schemes. His presence undoubtedly kept the Count of Charolais from his father's Court, and supported the authority of the Croï; but Philip refused to listen to the proposed cession of Lille, Douai, and Orchies, while he himself urged (1) that the king should be reconciled to the Count of Charolais; (2) that he should desist from attempting to constrain those who

[2] He had seen and treated with George Neville, Bishop of Exeter, the year before. It is probable that during these negotiations with the English he may have made extravagant and insincere offers, afterwards reported to his disadvantage.

held fiefs under the Crown to take any but the usual oaths of allegiance; and (3) should fulfil various stipulations of the treaty of Arras. Nothing was settled, and the king departed, announcing that he would repeat his visit in September. Unfortunately an event happened which disconcerted all his plans.

Fall of the Croï, and of the French Party.—The Chancellor of the Duke of Brittany, disguised as a friar, had been secretly sent to treat with the English Government. The king, "mysteriously and subtly as he did all things," commissioned a certain Bastard of Rubempré, a connection of the Croï, to intercept him. The Bastard missed his prey; but, apparently anxious not to return without profit to his employer, landed near Gorcum in Holland, where the Count of Charolais was then living. He not only ventured into the town, but even on to the walls of the castle, spying about and asking questions. He was followed, arrested, and examined; his answers were confused and contradictory. The count believed, or affected to believe, that he had been in danger of being kidnapped. He sent Oliver de la Marche to his father to relate what had happened, and to warn him to be on his guard since he was weakly attended, and the King of France had assembled considerable forces in the neighbourhood of Hesdin. Now that his attempt against the son had failed, and that his treachery was discovered, might not Lewis wish to seize the father? It was in vain that the Croï endeavoured to reassure the old man. They informed their patron of what had happened. With his usual confidence in his personal powers of flattery and persuasion, the king besought his uncle not to leave Hesdin till after their appointed interview. But neither he nor the Croï could induce Philip to remain, though he seems so far to have dreaded the remonstrances of the

latter, that he gave the orders for his departure to Lille secretly and during the night. It was to no purpose that the king disclaimed any design against Charolais, and pointed out that the Bastard of Rubempré had not been furnished with means in any way adequate to so great a venture. The Croï were in despair. "Never saw I men so confused and abashed," says Chastellain. The reconciliation of father and son which they saw to be imminent could not but entail their ruin. Their rapid fortune, their ostentation and pride, had excited the envy and the hate of many among the courtiers of the old duke, while to those who sought the favour of Charles it seemed a course both easy and safe to hasten the ruin of his weaker rivals. Yet they still had adherents in the Council, and not a few of the duke's servants dreaded to see their master entirely under the influence of his impetuous and vindictive son. If pushed to extremity the Croï might deliver the many fortresses they held to the king: nor was the duke's partiality for his old favourites easily overcome. These considerations determined Charles to offer fair terms to the man who, as he asserted, had not only insulted him and alienated from him his father's affection, but had endeavoured to cheat him of his birthright, and to betray him into the hands of his mortal foe. On condition that Antony de Croï would resign the places and pensions he held of the king he was to be allowed to dictate his own terms of reconciliation with the Count of Charolais. It is uncertain whether these offers were sincere; they at any rate were not trusted. The king had at first disclaimed all knowledge of the Bastard of Rubempré, then, relying perhaps on the disinclination of the Duke of Burgundy to do anything which would lead to an open breach, and wishing to strike a blow before the influence of the Croï was wholly gone, he sent an embassy, at the head of which

were the old Count of Eu[3], the Chancellor Morvilliers, and the Archbishop of Narbonne. The embassy was received with the wonted magnificence of the Court of Burgundy. The duke was seated on a dais of cloth of gold, with his son by his side. The chancellor spoke boldly and bitterly. His master's honour had suffered by the charges recklessly and publicly brought against him, charges as absurd as they were injurious, but which the abrupt departure of the duke from Hesdin seemed to countenance. The least reparation which could be made to the king was the surrender of Oliver de la Marche, and of certain friars who had slandered him from the pulpit at Bruges. The Bastard of Rubempré and his crew must be set at liberty. Morvilliers also commented on the persistent hostility of the Count of Charolais, and his treasonable correspondence with the Duke of Brittany and the English. The count interrupted the ambassadors several times, and could scarcely content himself with his father's promise that he should be allowed to speak on the following day. He sat up all night composing his reply, unassisted even by a secretary; it was more moderate than might have been expected. He maintained that he had reasonable grounds to suspect the Bastard, denied his privity to the negotiations with England, though he acknowledged his friendship for the Duke of Brittany, and protested that he never wished or hoped to injure the king. The answer of the duke was not more satisfactory. Rubempré would have a fair trial; he did not see any sufficient reason for surrendering Oliver de la Marche; as for the friars, they were not subject to his secular jurisdiction. The king had no just ground to complain because he had left Hesdin, since he had never promised to remain there. He would have them to know that he had never

[3] Charles d'Artois, the last of that branch of the royal family.

yet failed to keep his word, except occasionally to the ladies, he added with a smile. The ambassadors were unable to obtain anything more. As they were leaving, the Count of Charolais said to the Archbishop of Narbonne, "Commend me most humbly to the king's grace, and tell him that he has caused me to be shrewdly rated by his chancellor, but that he will have cause to repent it within a year." This embassy was the deathblow to the influence of the Croï. They were said to have inspired the arrogant language of Morvilliers. Their authority with Lewis was supposed to be so great, that everything he did, even though against their advice and contrary to their interests, was attributed to them. In March the duke fell ill at Brussels. Antony de Croï was absent. He had indeed left his nephew, the Lord of Quievrain, to discharge his duties as Lord Chamberlain, but the influence of the latter rested not on the daily habits of many years, the surest hold on the affections of an old man. Charolais persuaded his father to entrust him with the direction of affairs during his illness. He declared that the Croï, their friends and allies, were his enemies and the State's. Quievrain was compelled to fly in fear of his life, although the old duke tried to protect him. Seizing a pike he had hurried in impotent passion to the door of his palace, crying that he would see if his son meant to assassinate his servants. His senile rage was calmed, and he was coaxed back to his apartments by the ladies of the court. Henceforward the Count of Charolais governed his father and his father's dominions with little fear of opposition, the Croï were compelled to take refuge beyond the frontiers, and the discontented in France could count upon the support of the whole power of Burgundy.

Isolation of the King.—The position of Lewis XI. was now most critical. A reformer in advance of his age,

and unsupported by public opinion, must necessarily be exposed to extreme danger. They whose interests he has disregarded or threatened are encouraged to avenge or secure themselves by his destruction; while the classes for whom he has laboured are careless of his safety, not because they are ungrateful, but because they are not conscious of their obligations.

The great feudatories were most alarmed by the policy of the king, and they possessed both the will and the power to defend themselves. The attitude of Brittany became daily more hostile. Many subjects of dispute had arisen during the visit of Duke Francis to the king at Tours. In refusing to do liege homage[4] he only followed the example of his predecessors; but he gave other more unequivocal signs of his intention to act as an independent prince. He spoke in public documents of his ducal and sovereign authority; he entitled himself duke by the grace of God; he would not allow that the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris extended to his dominions; he claimed the right of regulating the currency of his duchy, of nominating to benefices, of enjoying their revenues when vacant (the regale), of receiving the homage of his bishops, and of treating independently with the Pope. In the autumn of 1463, some of these pretensions were referred to the arbitration of the Counts of le Maine and Comminges and of other commissioners. The duke had no intention to abide by their decision, and entered into a close alliance with the Count of Charolais, an alliance in which they hoped to include Edward IV. The Duke of Brittany proposed to transfer his allegiance to that monarch, and at the same time time accused

[4] No Duke of Brittany appears to have acknowledged that he did liege homage since John the Red in 1237. For the difference between "liege homage" and "homage, *per paragium*," see Hallam, M.A., chap. ii. part 1.

Lewis of offering to restore Normandy and Guienne to the English as the price of their assistance against his too powerful vassals.

The princes were further alarmed and irritated by the arrest of Philip, Count of Bresse, a younger son of the Duke of Savoy, and by the growth of the king's authority in that duchy. Lewis, Duke of Savoy, a prince of contemptible character and parts, was entirely governed by the courtiers who had accompanied his wife Anne of Lusignan from Cyprus. The favour shown to these foreigners excited the discontent of his subjects. Philip of Bresse placed himself at the head of the national party. He assassinated the duke's steward with his own hand in the chapel of Thonon during the mass, and in his parent's presence, and ordered the Chancellor of Savoy to be thrown into the lake. Shortly after the duchess died, and her death was attributed to the resentment and fear inspired by her son's violence. The duke requested the mediation and the interference of his son-in-law, the King of France, who invited him to Paris. After receiving a safe conduct, Philip of Bresse was also induced to proceed to the French Court with the intention of justifying his conduct. No sooner was he on French territory than he was seized by the king's order and conducted as a prisoner to the castle of Loches. The other princes of Savoy were kept about the Court, and for a time Lewis exercised as complete authority in that duchy as in any part of his own kingdom. The character and the crimes of the Count of Bresse merited little sympathy, the advantage of securing Savoy was great and obvious, yet so flagrant a breach of faith could hardly be justified, and proved a valuable addition to the medley of charges, some true, some false, some idle, brought against Lewis by his enemies.

The Duke of Bourbon, discontented from the first by

the loss of his government of Guienne, and disappointed at not receiving the sword of constable, readily joined the Duke of Brittany and Charles of Burgundy in their plots against the king. The death of the Queen Dowager Mary of Anjou, who had formed a bond of union between the Angevin princes and her son, disposed them to listen with greater complacency to the suggestions of his enemies. The Duke of Alençon, for whom fraud and treason appeared to possess an invincible attraction, sought refuge at the Court of Brittany, which had become the resort of all who hated or feared the king.

While the greater vassals were preparing almost openly for a struggle against the royal authority, the smaller nobles were scarcely more loyal. Sport occupies a less important place in the interests of the most devoted fox-hunter and game-preserver of our own day than in the life of an ordinary mediæval gentleman. He probably lived in a dreary tower, without society, without books, and without politics. His hunting, his hawks and his hounds, were his only amusement. Nor was the chase his pastime only, it was also his privilege—that which marked him out as a man of gentle birth, and doubly cherished on that account. When, therefore, it was reported that the king, himself a mighty hunter, had selfishly determined that no one but himself should take part in so noble a diversion; that he had ordered all private preserves, all implements of sport, to be destroyed; that a poor gentleman of Normandy had even lost his ears for coursing a hare on his own estate, the discontent was deep and universal. The king, when he asserted that hunting was a royal privilege, probably intended to raise money by selling the right of sharing in that privilege, as well as to limit the injury occasioned to agriculture, and the tyranny inflicted on the peasantry by the game-

laws.[5] But such considerations would not be appreciated by the ignorant and excited country gentry; they preferred to believe an improbable and absurd tale. Nor was this interference with their sport the only cause of the king's unpopularity amongst this class. They had been called upon to pay all feudal dues which had fallen into arrear, and he had insisted that the privileged possessors of unprivileged estates should bear their fair share of taxation. Moreover, the readiness with which he granted patents of nobility to burghers and tradesmen seemed to show that he thought lightly of the claims of gentle blood, while his scanty retinue and shabby Court offered few attractions and little chance of profitable service to those who would have thronged to enjoy the feasts and pageants and favours of a more lavish ruler. Nor could the loyalty of the clergy be relied upon. Lewis had required from them, on pain of confiscation, an exact account and description of their possessions, and of the title by which they were held; a measure which they considered most threatening and dangerous to their interests. The conduct of the Government with regard to the Pragmatic Sanction had caused them nothing but loss and embarrassment. Large sums were spent at Rome to purchase benefices, or to secure the favour of the Vatican. When, after endless trouble and expense, the longed-for preferment had been secured, the king allowed his courts to declare the presentation illegal. It was in ecclesiastical matters that his habit of giving with one hand what he intended to take away again with the other

[5] See the instances quoted by Michelet, vol. vi. p. 80, from the king's accounts of sums of money given by the king to old women whose cat or sheep his dogs had killed, or to farmers for damage done to their crops in hunting. Such charity would not do much for his popularity, and probably shows that Lewis felt for the sufferings of the lower classes.

was productive of most confusion. The University of Paris, which, although far less influential than it had been, was still a power in the State, was alienated by the king's creation and encouragement of provincial universities; just as the Parliament of Paris felt aggrieved that the king should have curtailed its jurisdiction by creating a rival tribunal at Bordeaux.

The course of events in England had been such as greatly to encourage the enemies of the French Government. Lewis had gained Warwick, or at any rate had secured his support to the scheme of marrying Edward IV. to a princess of Savoy. Edward's sudden passion for Elizabeth Gray and secret marriage overthrew these arrangements. Whether the result of chance or not, it was a signal victory for the party of Burgundy. The Count of Charolais sent James of Luxemburg, the brother of St. Pol, with a splendid train, to attend the coronation of his niece, the new Queen of England. James of Luxemburg, whose sister had married the Duke of Brittany, was doubtless a useful agent in the negotiations between that prince, England, and Burgundy.

Precautions of the King.—Lewis saw the storm gathering round him from all quarters, and prepared as best he could to meet it.

His foreign allies were neither numerous nor powerful. In December 1463, he had ceded Savona and all his claims upon Genoa to Francis Sforza, whose admiration and friendship was secured by a policy as wise as it was generous. He endeavoured at the same time to strengthen the alliance he had been careful to maintain with the Swiss, since he had learned to know their value. He even concluded an alliance with George Podiebrad of Bohemia; but Liège was his nearest and most valuable ally. Its position, and power of annoying his most

dangerous enemy, made its assistance valuable beyond all proportion to it size. Something also might be hoped from the skilfully excited discontent of the turbulent Flemish towns. Meantime the discipline of the companies of ordonance was carefully maintained, and the establishment of the royal post enabled the king to send his orders, and to receive the reports of his generals and ministers, with certainty and despatch.

Lewis endeavoured to secure the support of public opinion, and summoned an assembly at Rouen of the deputies of the towns on the northern frontiers. To them he pointed out the absurdity of the charges brought against him, and begged them to look to the fortifications and defence of their cities. He next invited the great nobles to a conference at Tours. He hoped by taking the initiative to compel them to pronounce in his favour against the Duke of Brittany. His summons was obeyed by King René of Sicily, by the Dukes of Orleans, Bourbon, and Nemours; by the Counts of le Maine, Angoulême, Nevers, Foix, Penthievre, Dunois, St. Pol, and other great nobles. He addressed the assembly in a speech of surpassing eloquence. He rebutted the ridiculous reports that he wished to betray his kingdom to the English, he dwelt on his labours and unwearying exertions for the public good, and on the great results he had obtained; Picardy and Roussillon regained; many reforms effected, yet more in course of preparation. He exposed the disloyal conduct of the Duke of Brittany, his negotiations with Edward IV., and his refusal to accept the award of the Count of le Maine and the other commissioners. "Yet," he concluded, "if every castle of the duke were in my power, I should act in such wise that you would see how far from my wish it is to ruin the noble and ancient house of Brittany." The eloquence

of the king moved many who were present to tears. King René replied on behalf of the assembled princes. He abominated the calumnies which had been circulated about Lewis, deplored the treason of the Duke of Brittany, protested that he and the other great vassals were ready to sacrifice their liberty and their lives in the king's service. The old Duke of Orleans alone ventured to say a few words in defence of his nephew Francis of Brittany. He was answered so sharply by the king, that his death, a week or two later, was attributed to the mortification he felt at being addressed in such terms.

League of the Public Good.—If Lewis placed any faith in the protestations and tears of these nobles and princes, he was soon undeceived. The majority were already privy to the conspiracy against him. At the end of December (1464) a great meeting of the confederates, or their representatives, was held in the Church of Our Lady at Paris. They recognised each other by a tag of red silk. "Thus," says Oliver de la Marche, "was concluded this league, concerning which the king could never learn anything, although it comprised more than five hundred members—princes, knights, and squires, ladies and damsels. And their adventure was called the 'Public Weal,' because it was entered upon under the pretext of the public good of the realm." It seems probable, however, that Lewis was not as ignorant of the plot that was being formed against him as the Burgundian chronicler supposes. He showed great anxiety to come to a friendly understanding with Brittany; but although the Duke Francis entered into negotiations, his only aim was to gain time for the confederates to complete their preparations, and to extend his intrigues by means of his ambassadors.

The Duke of Berri places himself at the Head of the Rebels.—The circumstance which led the members of the league to declare themselves was the flight of the Duke of Berri to the Court of Brittany, at the instigation of Odet D'Aydie, the Breton envoy. That young prince, vain, frivolous, and without strength of mind or character, was discontented with the dulness and discomfort of a frugal and wandering Court. He did not, perhaps, forget that a faction had once hoped to raise him to the first place in the State, and he was easily persuaded of the neglect or the hatred of his brother. The most dangerous enemies of the Government were already collected round Francis of Brittany. Among them were Dunois, Loheac, Tannegui du Châtel, and others of the late king's ministers. At their instigation, the Duke of Berri wrote a letter to the Duke of Burgundy, which served as their manifesto. He expatiated on the disorder of the country, the unworthiness of the Government, the oppression of the people by taxes and illegal exactions; announced that he and other lords, his kinsmen, had determined to take up arms for the Public Good, and besought Philip to unite with them, or at least to send the Count of Charolais with a powerful army. The king, on hearing of his brother's flight, immediately began to collect his forces. He summoned the Duke of Bourbon to join him with the company of ordonance he commanded. The duke replied by a public letter, in which he declared that he and the other princes of the blood had bound themselves by an oath to compel the king to reform the Government and redress the grievances of the nation. Lewis learned at the same time that Dammartin had escaped from the Bastille, and, with the assistance of a brother of the Duke of Bourbon, after seizing Bourges, was calling the nobility of Berri to arms.

Charles of France had fled from Poitiers at the very time when the illness of Philip and the fall of the Croï left the forces of Burgundy at the disposal of the Count of Charolais. His father would have disapproved of active hostilities to France, but the reign of Philip was ended, and he was now only an instrument in the hands of his headstrong and passionate son. Charles demanded subsidies from the Estates, and ordered the feudal levies of the Low Countries to be under arms by the beginning of May. The king prepared to defend himself with skill and resolution against the dangers which threatened him on all sides. The princes, or their more enlightened advisers, had done homage to the new principle that the public good was the proper object and justification of government in their manifestoes, and by the name they had given to their league. Lewis replied by causing letters to be published throughout the kingdom, in which he pointed out how little the princes who had conspired against him cared for the "public good," or for anything but their private interests: "The country had hitherto been quiet, trade safe and protected; now the land would be devastated by fire and sword, insecure and impoverished. Many had been deceived by fine words. Let them return to their allegiance within six weeks; they should have full pardon. The princes pretended to wish to introduce order everywhere, order which they would nowhere endure. Had the king chosen to increase their pensions, and to allow them to oppress their vassals, they would never have thought about the public good."

The Plan of the King.—Even after the defection of the Duke of Bourbon, if the king could have been certain of the loyalty of his officers, the plan of action upon which he determined offered every chance of success. He saw that the confederates would seek to gain the

capital, which he endeavoured to secure, sending two of his most trusted servants, Charles de Melun and Bishop Balue, to superintend the preparations for its defence, and gratifying the citizens by various concessions and conciliatory decrees. He especially relied on the difficulties and delays which always attended the combined operations of feudal armies. The Count of le Maine, with a sufficient force, was to check the advance of the Dukes of Brittany and Berri, whose preparations were less rapidly and vigorously conducted than those of the Burgundians. Meantime Lewis hoped with his small but well-organised army of companies of ordonance and free archers to be able to crush the Duke of Bourbon and the rebels of the southern and central provinces, and then turning northwards, and combining his forces to defeat the Bretons and Burgundians separately before they should be able to effect a juncture. The event proved that the king had not overestimated the superior organisation and mobility of his troops. But the execution of his plan was embarrassed by the treachery and ingratitude of the men whom he had trusted. The defection of the Count of Armagnac, a monster in whom perfidy seemed a venial peccadillo, could excite little surprise. But Lewis might reasonably have counted on the support of the Duke of Nemours, whom he had loaded with favours, which had provoked the protests of Parliament and the jealousy of the princes of the blood. Before the middle of May the king was master of the greater part of the Bourbonnais, of Auvergne, and of Berri. Bourges was still held against him by a strong garrison, but he did not waste his time in besieging it. The Counts of Foix and Comminges were loyal, and their influence and the favour which the king had shown those provinces secured the tranquillity of Guienne and Languedoc. Nemours was slowly advancing, as Lewis sup-

posed, to join him; in a week or two the authority of the Government would be fully re-established in the south, and the royal forces might be concentrated on the Loire or the Somme before the armies of Burgundy or Brittany had passed the frontiers. But instead of joining the king the Duke of Nemours sent to demand a safe-conduct, and proposed to treat on behalf of the princes. The terms which he and the king's sister, the Duchess of Bourbon, demanded in the name of her husband and his allies were exorbitant. The government of the provinces was to be divided among the leading rebels, and the king was to be controlled by a council. It is difficult to see why Lewis should have wasted twenty most valuable days in negotiations. It is not a sufficient explanation that his ambassadors, Antony du Lau, Lord of Châteauneuf, and the Bishop of Bayeux, were traitors, who did not even shrink from suggesting plots for his imprisonment or assassination. At length, hearing that the Armagnacs, the Duke of Bourbon, and the Lord of Albret were assembled at Riom in Auvergne, and had received a reinforcement of 200 lances from Burgundy, he again began to act with vigour, crossed the Allier, took Gannat by storm, and so terrified the rebels by his resolution and conduct, that, fearing to give battle, they signed a convention (July 4), by which they engaged to lay down their arms, to abstain from future hostilities, and to send envoys in August to negotiate with the king and the other princes at Paris. But a month had been lost; it was no longer possible for the king to meet his enemies on the frontiers; and only the greatest activity would enable him to reach Paris before it was exposed to the attacks of their united armies.

Charolais Threatens Paris.—The Count of Charolais had taken the field on the 15th of May. Philip was

now entirely under the influence of his son. "Go," he said, as they parted, "go, maintain well your honour, and if you should need 100,000 men to come to your rescue, I myself will lead them." The Burgundian army consisted of 1,400 lances, 8,000 archers, and a host of light-armed troops, cross-bowmen and others. The equipment and strength of his artillery excited much admiration. Among his officers were two old captains, the Lords of Hautbourdin and Contai, whose advice was highly valued, since they had served in the English wars under Lords Salisbury and Talbot and other famous generals. Yet though the army of Charolais was numerous and splendid, his troops were far inferior to those of the king in discipline and military experience. The states of the Duke of Burgundy had long enjoyed peace, and many of the men-at-arms did not even know how to couch a lance. Charolais met with little opposition in his march on Paris. The Count of Nevers, the Governor of Picardy, had been ordered to do his utmost to retard his advance, but his forces were inadequate. It was with difficulty that he and the Marshal Joachim Rouault, one of the most loyal and energetic of the king's officers, had assembled some 4,000 men. A large proportion of the nobility of Picardy, instead of obeying the summons of their governor, had joined the banners of the Count of St. Pol. Nevers, moreover, was ready to betray his trust, had Charles condescended to hold out any hope of reconciliation. Nesle, Roie, Montdidier, and Brai surrendered to the Burgundians. The Oise was crossed at Pont St. Maxence, which was betrayed by its captain, and St. Denis was occupied without resistance. The progress of the invaders had been facilitated by the good order they observed.[6] They

[6] Jean de Troies, p. 253, says they did much harm in the Isle de France: "Non obstant qu'ils disoient partout où ils passoient, qu'ils venoient pour affranchir le pays de France et pour le bien public."

paid for all they took, proclaimed that they came for the public good, burnt the registers of the taxes, and distributed gratuitously the salt in the royal storehouses. Rouault entered Paris with 110 lances about the same time that the enemy reached St. Denis. The city had been secured by various precautions. Some of the gates were walled up, the chains and defences of the streets repaired; and the bulk of the citizens, if not enthusiastic in their loyalty, were on the whole contented and disposed to rate at their just value the patriotic professions of the princes. But the arrival of the Dukes of Brittany and Berri was daily expected. John of Calabria, with the feudal levies of the duchy of Burgundy and some of the Italian mercenaries who had served under him in his Neapolitan wars, was on his way to reinforce the army of the Count of Charolais. If the rebels succeeded in joining their forces, and in throwing themselves between the king and his capital, his position would be perilous in the extreme. Hence the impatience of Charolais at the repeated delays of the Duke of Brittany, an impatience which the Chancellor of Brittany, who accompanied the Burgundians, endeavoured to satisfy by producing fictitious dispatches announcing the speedy arrival of his master.

The King Approaches Paris.—Immediately after the signature of the convention of Riom, the king hastened towards Paris by forced marches. His army consisted of about 12,000 excellent troops, almost entirely cavalry. At Orleans he was joined by the Count of le Maine, who had retreated before the Duke of Brittany. Peter de Brézè advised the king to turn aside and attack the Bretons; there were, he said, in that army many captains of Charles VII. who would shrink from fighting against the king; the forces of the duke did not amount to more than 10,000 men, so that the royalists would have the

advantage of numerical superiority, and a victory would determine those whose loyalty was ambiguous. On the other hand, it was maintained that not a few of the king's soldiers would see their former officers in the opposite ranks, and that if these did not at the eleventh hour bethink them of the reverence due to the royal person, they might by the lingering tie of military obedience, seduce the men they once had commanded. Against the Burgundians the soldiers would fight with valour and fidelity, since they would be inspired by long-continued hostility and by the memory of former injuries. The king himself was disposed to avoid a general action, and to throw himself into Paris without engaging the confederates. The loss of a battle would be fatal, and he could feel no confidence, however favourable the chances might appear, since he justly distrusted the fidelity of his captains.[7] Brézè himself was said to sympathise with the rebels, and when pressed by the king to say whether he had not signed their league, he evaded the question by a joke. The conduct of the Count of le Maine had been marked by indecision and apathy, and he was yet to give a more

[7] The statement of Commines that the king had repeatedly told him he did not intend to risk a battle, seems inconsistent with the fact that Lewis wrote to Charles de Melun announcing that he intended to attack Charolais, and ordering him to support his attack by a sally. Probably the king foresaw that he might be forced to give battle, and his orders were only provisional. He had determined, at whatever cost, to enter Paris. The whole question of the treachery of Charles de Melun seems obscure. 1. Commines emphatically affirms his innocence; he had apparently no cause for partiality, and is generally disposed to excuse and justify the acts of Lewis XI., with whom he had probably discussed the facts of the case. 2. At the time of the condemnation of Charles de Melun, his bitter enemies, Dammartin and Balue, were the king's most trusted advisers. 3. But, on the other hand, if he had attacked the Burgundians, their defeat would have been certain; and he does not himself seem to have denied receiving the king's orders, or to have seriously justified his disobedience; and the subsequent attempt to betray the Bastille might justly excite suspicion. See below, p. 81.

striking proof of the danger of relying on his zeal or courage.

Battle of Montl'héri.—When the king drew near to Paris, he found that Charles had crossed the Seine, so as to place himself between him and the city, and that he could scarcely hope any longer to avoid an engagement. He sent repeated orders to the governor of the city, Charles de Melun, ordering him to send the Marshal Rouault and 200 lances to threaten the enemies' rear. On the 15th of July Charolais arranged his troops in the position he had chosen at Longjumeau, the Count of St. Pol and the vanguard occupying the village of Montl'héri, two leagues in advance, while the Bastard of Burgundy and the rear-guard remained an equal distance behind. Lewis passed the night of the 15th at Châtres, but some of his scouts had occupied the tower of Montl'héri, on the summit of the hill overhanging the village. On the morning of the 16th, Brézé, who commanded the advanced guard of the royalists, attacked St. Pol, apparently against the king's orders. "I will bring them so close together," he said to some friends, "that he who would separate them must indeed be clever." Whatever his object may have been, he fell at the very beginning of the action. It had been agreed that St. Pol, if attacked, should fall back; instead of doing so he drew up his men behind a ditch and hedge which ran across the plain not far from Montl'héri. His archers strengthened the position by driving in their pointed stakes, so as to form a palisade, and he protected his flanks with his baggage waggons. He then sent to beg the Count of Charolais to support him, since he could no longer retire with honour or safety. Meantime the main body of the French was also advancing. The engagement had begun at seven o'clock, but it was little more than a skirmish till midday, when the king and the

count arrived on the field. Much time was wasted by the latter in making his men-at-arms dismount and again mount. Every one around offered suggestions, till the Lord of Contai pointed out that the French were only gradually coming into position, but that if Charles delayed much longer he would be outnumbered. As the king's line was someway off, and as the Burgundians would have first to skirt the ditch and then to make their way through fields of high standing crops, he impressed upon his master the necessity of halting once or twice to breathe the infantry, and to enable them to keep their ranks. Such caution was not to be expected from the headstrong Charolais; he advanced at full speed, and without maintaining any order, against the enemy. They also were drawn up behind a ditch, but on the approach of the Burgundians advanced to meet them: their left wing was driven back by the arrows of the archers, and being charged with great impetuosity by Charles, was easily routed. The Count of le Maine and the Admiral Montauban rode off without striking a blow, accompanied by 3,000 or 4,000 horsemen. Had they offered the slightest resistance, Charles must infallibly have been taken prisoner or slain, since he pursued the fugitives half a league beyond the town of Montl'héri accompanied by scarce a hundred men. The traitors or cowards excused themselves by a report that the king had fallen. At length the count, who thought himself completely victorious, was persuaded to turn, for his left wing had been as thoroughly routed as that of the French. He only made his way back through the village with difficulty, was furiously attacked by a body of men-at-arms, and wounded in the throat, and would have been captured but for the courage and prowess of one of his companions. Meantime, the victorious right wing of the French, for the most part levies from Dauphiny and

Savoyard volunteers, after routing the inexperienced and disorderly force opposed to them, had separated in the pursuit of the fugitives and the plunder of the baggage. Nothing else could have saved Charles. The king, after fighting valiantly, and showing himself with bare head to his troops, to prove that he had not been killed, had retired to the tower of Montl'héri, accompanied only by a few of the archers of his guard. The armies were entirely scattered, but their commanders occupied the same positions as before the engagement. The Count of Charolais was joined by St. Pol, who had rallied some of his men in a neighbouring wood, and passed the night in much anxiety. Most of his advisers were of opinion that he should burn his baggage and retreat as rapidly as possible, rather than remain in so precarious a position between the king's army and Paris. The Lord of Contai, on the other hand, maintained that there would be no safety in a retreat, which would soon degenerate into a flight through a hostile country. About daybreak it was known that the king had fallen back to Corbeil, and had left the field of battle in the possession of his opponents. Apparently he was alarmed at the inaction of Charles de Melun, and did not know what treachery he might have to fear. When they found they would not again have to fight there was not a little rejoicing among the Burgundians, and some talked of pursuit whose thoughts had been far different an hour before. Soon after the Chancellor of Brittany, who had been one of the first to fly, reappeared, bringing with him two archers of his master's guard, who announced the near approach of the two dukes. "All that day," says Commines, "my Lord of Charolais remained on the field, very joyful, and assured that all the glory was his. This has since cost him dear, for never after would he take any man's advice, but loved war, and in it spent

all his days, to the loss of his life and the ruin of his house."

Yet if there was a victor in this strange battle it was the king, who was able to enter Paris on the 18th. The losses of the Burgundians had been much greater than those of the French. Rouault, indignant at the inaction of the governor, had sallied from Paris and recaptured Pont St. Maxence and St. Cloud; while the Commandant of Compiegne assembled the neighbouring garrisons, and joined the marshal in capturing the fugitives and intercepting the baggage and supplies which were following the Count of Charolais. The Burgundians who had taken to flight proclaimed everywhere that their army had been routed, Charles slain or captured, and spread consternation in Artois and Brabant. Those who had so disgracefully left the field on the French side spread similar reports about their king. Some of these fell into the hands of the Bretons, who greatly rejoiced at these tidings, since they considered that the Duke Charles of Berri, whom they had among them, was now king, and their only thought was how to prevent the Burgundians from profiting too much by their victory.

The Princes before Paris.—The Count of Charolais and the Dukes of Brittany and Berri united their forces at Étampes (July 21). They had scarcely met before distrust and jealousy began to show themselves. Charles of France betrayed some signs of regret at having embarked in an enterprise which was likely to cost so much suffering and so many lives. This weakness provoked the contempt and suspicion of the Burgundian, who thought such an ally likely enough to conclude separate terms of accommodation and to leave him in the lurch. He accordingly concluded a secret treaty with the Duke of Brittany, and began at the same time to seek for allies abroad. He had

hitherto professed his sympathy for the house of Lancaster, with which he was connected through his mother, and had expressed his contempt for the usurper Edward, yet he now made overtures to him, and even suggested his willingness to marry the Lady Margaret of York.[8]

About a fortnight later the confederates were joined by the forces of Lorraine and of the duchy of Burgundy, under the command of the Duke of Calabria, who was accompanied by the Italian mercenaries of the Count of Campobasso, and by 1,500 Swiss, the first who had served in France. Shortly after the Dukes of Bourbon and Nemours and the Count of Armagnac arrived, violating the conditions they had so recently pledged their honour to observe; but their ill-paid and rapacious bands added little to the strength or popularity of the allies.

The princes, whose army now amounted to nearly 100,000 horse, felt strong enough to advance against Paris. They occupied the bridge of Charenton (August 20), and took up their position between the Marne and the Seine, their line extending from St. Denis and St. Cloud to Charenton and St. Maur. The Count of Charolais and the Duke of Calabria were lodged at Conflans, the Dukes of Berri and Brittany at St. Maur.

The king had been gradually joined at Paris by the fugitives who had deserted him in so cowardly a manner. He received all with the same courtesy, and appeared to think no sacrifice too great to secure the good will of the citizens. Though greatly in want of money, he remitted the tax levied on the retail sale of wine and all other duties, except those on bread, cloth, sea-fish, and cattle. He also abandoned his plan of raising a military force by conscription among the citizens, and admitted into his

[8] So Commines. But the Countess of Charolais, Isabella of Bourbon, was still alive. She did not die till September 25, 1465.

council six representatives of the city, of the University, and of the Parliament. Charles of Melun was deprived of the government of Paris on the pretext of honouring the citizens by giving them a captain of the blood royal, the Count of Eu. After staying three weeks in his capital, Lewis left for Normandy (August 10) to hasten the advance of the forces of that duchy, which were delayed by the ill will of the higher nobility and clergy. It was a dangerous move; but Paris could not be held without reinforcements and without securing its communications with the country. The confederates, notwithstanding their formidable numbers, did not attempt an assault or even an effective investment. They had adherents within the walls, and trusted to reduce or terrify their opponents into submission before the return of the king. On August 22, the Duke of Berri sent his heralds to announce to the citizens that he and his kinsmen had come for the common good of the kingdom, and to demand that a deputation of notable men should be sent to confer with him at Beauté-sur-Marne. Next day, accordingly, a deputation, headed by the Bishop of Paris, appeared before the princes, and was harangued by the popular hero of the English wars, the old Count of Dunois. He dwelt on the usual topics: the tyranny of Lewis, his hatred of the princes of his blood, his alliance with the enemies of his family—Sforza and Ferdinand of Sicily; he also touched upon his refusal to assemble the States General. If the town refused to receive the confederates, they were not responsible for the misfortunes that would ensue. Two days would be granted for deliberation, on the third Paris would be carried by storm. When the deputies returned, a meeting was held to consider what answer should be given by the municipality. The royalists were in the minority, for the higher class of burgesses were anxious to end a conflict

which they considered prejudicial to their interests; and many of the members of the Parliament and the University were actively hostile to the king, and thought that the time was come to revenge themselves for the insults and slights which he had carelessly inflicted. It was generally agreed that the princes should be admitted within the walls, but only with a moderate escort. Had this resolution been carried out, Paris would have been lost; and the king told Commines that nothing would have been left for him but to seek a refuge with the Swiss or with his friend Francis Sforza. But the Count of Eu assembled his forces, 3,000 men-at-arms, besides numerous archers and infantry; the populace thronged the streets seeking with many threats the traitors who were about to deliver the city to the Burgundians and to pillage. The meeting was intimidated, and the envoys were sent back to reply that the proposals of the princes could not be answered till the good pleasure of the king was known. Almost simultaneously the Admiral Montauban entered the town at the head of a strong body of lances, and announced the return of the king with an army within three days. Instead of having to resist an assault, the garrison on the next day made a sally and captured several prisoners.

The king brought with him not only 12,000 excellent troops with artillery and munitions of war, but also abundant provisions. Indeed, throughout the time that the rebels lay before Paris, there was much greater plenty in the town than in their camp. This was partly owing to the forethought of the king, partly to their carelessness, for they had taken no pains to obstruct the navigation of the Yonne, the Marne, and the Seine, down which rivers the supplies of the city were brought. When a truce permitted, the townsfolk sold provisions at a high profit to their starving enemies.

Lewis treated the men, who in his absence had wished to admit the rebels, with great clemency; some only were banished, and a few dismissed from their offices. The royal forces were now not greatly inferior in number, and far superior in equipment and discipline to those of the allies. The oriflamme[9] was fetched from St. Denis, and a great battle was expected with satisfaction and confidence by soldiers and citizens. But the experience of Montl'héri did not decrease the king's dislike of general engagements. He preferred to trust to the difficulties of his opponents, and to the disputes which were certain to arise between jealous and independent leaders. He had a high opinion of his own skill in fostering and profiting by such divisions, and above all he felt that the loss of a battle would be more fatal to him than to his opponents, since it would involve the surrender of Paris and the desertion of his remaining adherents. He also hoped that some diversion might be effected by his allies. He had signed a treaty in June with the men of Liège, who defied the Duke of Burgundy and besieged Limburg; the galleys of Ferdinand of Sicily threatened the coast of Provence, and prevented any reinforcements from that county reaching the Duke of Calabria; indeed, his father, King René, who had taken no active part in the war, advised him to abandon the adventure and to conclude a separate treaty with the king. The Duke of Milan sent his son, Galeazzo, to attack the enemies of his ally in the south, urging him at the same time to make any and every concession, if by so doing he could separate the confederates and sow dissensions among them.

[9] The oriflamme was properly the banner of the Abbey of St. Denis, and was borne by the kings of France, as Counts of the Vexin, and hereditary "advocates" or protectors of that religious community. The last time that it was actually displayed in battle was at Agincourt.

Negotiations of the King.—Although no general engagement was allowed, brisk skirmishes were fought almost every day, and there was much cannonading on both sides; yet the king continually carried on negotiations, which were not so successful as he had hoped. His excessive caution appeared weakness, and encouraged the pretensions of his adversaries; his affability and readiness to forgive and reward his enemies disgusted his more faithful supporters, and seemed to suggest that to conspire and war against him was the safest as well as the most profitable policy. The terms proposed by the princes were nothing less than the partition of the kingdom, and an appanage for the Duke of Berri, which would make him an independent sovereign, Guienne with Saintonge and Poitou, or Normandy. The king, confiding as usual in his dexterity and personal powers of persuasion, determined to seek an interview with Charolais. It might be refused if formally demanded, he therefore determined to come unannounced, and to trust himself amongst his enemies, if Charles would pledge his word for his safety. The count piqued himself on his chivalrous loyalty, and would be conciliated by such marked confidence, and it was certainly more easy to show the engaging frankness and familiar geniality, which Lewis could affect, in such a meeting than in one conducted, as was then usual, through the bars of a wooden cage. Though he readily granted all that Charles asked for himself and flattered his vanity with consummate skill, Lewis did not succeed in persuading him to abandon his confederates. It was not that the Burgundian did not despise and distrust the effeminate Dukes of Brittany and Berri, who wore corselets of silk studded with golden nails to avoid the weight of more manly armour, and held private conferences in his very presence, but his wiser councillors pointed out the

danger of offending these princes, or of separating his interests from theirs, since the king would gladly admit them to terms which would enable him to concentrate his forces against his most dangerous enemy. Lewis would have yielded everything but Normandy, on which the confederates now insisted, as the appanage of Charles of France, Normandy, the richest province of France, and geographically the most important. The king felt that his position became daily more precarious. The townsfolk were indignant that the Burgundians should live on their farms and gather in their grapes. The presence of so large an army in the city gave rise to much ill feeling, although all insolence and violence on the part of the soldiers were sternly punished. Nothing, indeed, was neglected which could stimulate the loyalty of the Parisians. The king and some of his courtiers became brethren of the principal guild. An assemby of notables was called, comprising many leading citizens. The terms proposed by the princes were explained, and their advice asked. They replied, "That the king could not grant such terms, nor separate Guienne or Normandy from his Crown."

The tidings of some new treachery constantly alarmed the king. Pontoise was sold by its governor (Sept. 21). A few days afterwards the gates of the Bastille were left open and the cannon spiked; fires as it happened had been lighted in the streets and the watch doubled. Charles de Melun, whose father was Governor of the Bastille, persuaded the king to send orders to the guard to put out the fires and to go home. The fortunate or intelligent disobedience of the citizens was supposed by many to have saved the town. On the next day came the news that (Sept. 27) Rouen was betrayed. Madame de Brézè found means to admit the Duke of Bourbon. She had lately informed the king that she had expelled from the

city some men whom she considered disloyal; but the Bishop of Bayeux, an unscrupulous intriguer, persuaded her that her husband had been assassinated while leading his troops into battle. Her son, more loyal or less credulous, after vainly endeavouring to prevent her treachery, joined the king, who bestowed upon him his father's dignity of Seneschal of Normandy.

The Treaty of St. Maur or Conflans.—The loss of this duchy determined the king to yield. He at once demanded an interview with Charolais. Never, he said, would he freely have consented to separate Normandy from the Crown, but since the inhabitants had chosen for themselves, he was content to bestow it on his brother. Charles of Burgundy was not less eager to treat than the king, for the difficulties of his position daily increased. The season was advancing, his army was ill supplied with provisions and other necessaries, while the various and discordant interests of his allies were the cause of constant cabals and divisions. He therefore readily agreed to the terms offered, and so immersed were the princes in their conversation, that they heedlessly entered an outwork of the fortifications of Paris. Charles concealed the alarm he felt when he saw that he was in his enemy's power, unprotected even by any pledge or safe-conduct. However great the temptation, Lewis remained apparently unconscious. The crime of Montereau had, it is true, been punished by years of disaster and humiliation; yet Charles would have left no son to avenge his death, and even if his assassination were dangerous and criminal, his imprisonment might have seemed both just and expedient.

A truce was published on October 1st, and the rest of the month was spent in negotiations. The first treaty was signed at St. Maur-des-Fossés on the 29th. Its terms

embodied the original demands of the princes. (1.) Charolais recovered the towns on the Somme so recently redeemed. After his death and that of his immediate successor, the King of France might again possess them by payment of 200,000 gold crowns. Péronne, Roie, Montdidier, and the county of Guines were ceded absolutely, and the possession of the county of Boulogne, claimed by the family of La Tour D'Auvergne, guaranteed to Charles. (2.) Various towns on the frontiers of Lorraine, and the king's rights over Toul and Verdun were granted to the Duke of Calabria, together with 100,000 crowns, and the pay for six months of 500 lances, which he was to employ against Ferdinand of Sicily or Metz. (3.) The Duke of Brittany received the counties of Étampes and Montfort, and the sovereign prerogatives which he claimed were allowed. (4.) The Duke of Bourbon was gratified by territorial concessions, by a share in the royal taxes levied in his domains, 100,000 crowns, the government of Guienne, and the pay of 300 lances. (5.) The Count of St. Pol was to be constable; the double treason of Nemours was rewarded with the government of Paris and of the Isle of France, a pension, and the pay of 200 lances; the Count of Armagnac recovered the Rouergue. (6.) The Counts of Dunois and Dammartin, the Grand-Equerry Tannegui du Châtel, and others of the late king's favourites and ministers, recovered their places and possessions, receiving additional gifts and pensions. (7.) No mention was made of the States General, or even of the Pragmatic Sanction; the representatives of the country might have objected to its wholesale spoliation, and it is probable that Charolais did not wish to offend the Pope. In order that the public good might not appear to be altogether forgotten in the triumph of its champions, it was stipulated that the king should

appoint a commission of twelve knights, twelve prelates, and twelve members of the Supreme Courts of Justice, to investigate and inquire into the disorders and abuses of the commonwealth, and to remedy them by their edicts and ordinances. As the choice of these reformers was left to the king, this clause of the treaty could not cause him any disquiet.

Lewis continued to treat those who had thus humiliated him with the utmost friendliness and confidence, seeking no doubt to penetrate their motives and private aims, and determining in his own mind which of them he should use as his instrument in attacking his more formidable enemies, and undoing what they had themselves helped to effect. He flattered Charolais, now a widower, by offering him the hand of his daughter Anne, a maiden two years old, with Champagne as her dower, and he soothed the impatience of the bridegroom with the immediate gift of the county of Ponthieu.

Separation of the Confederates.—After the ratification of the treaty of St. Maur, the confederates hastily separated to occupy and enjoy the concessions they had secured. The royal power appeared to have been struck down by a blow so crushing that they had no fear of its immediate revival. Yet if Lewis bent low before the storm, he intended not for one moment to acquiesce in his defeat; nor was that defeat so irretrievable as at first it may have seemed. His enemies did not improve their victory. If they had any aim or policy in common it was to found little isolated despotisms, in direct opposition to the growing sense of nationality and unity, stimulated by the English wars. "The Barons of England, in taking the lead of the people against the Crown, had become an aristocracy, and had laid the foundations of a political organism. The French nobles used their victory differ-

ently. They exacted no positive guarantee, none which might be fruitful of further development. The securities they sought were negative. They made the king swear that he would never compel any of them to attend his Court, and never visit them without warning. All that they aimed at was independence, and they were careless of power, which could only be obtained by union and common action. They wished to remain petty sovereigns, rather than to become the leaders of an aristocracy, the members of a mighty state."[1]

But it may be doubted whether we can justly speak of the leaders of the league as a class. The princes of the blood and a few great nobles, such as the Counts of Armagnac and St. Pol, wished to divide France into six or seven independent principalities, yet many of those, without whom the league would never have existed, and whom Lewis had found his most active and dangerous enemies, such men as Dunois, Dammartin, Tannegui du Châtel, Odet D'Aydie, the Estoutevilles and Jouvenels, the soldiers, statesmen, and lawyers by profession, were willing to aid him in his ambitious projects, provided that he would accept and reward their services. And they were the more likely to be loyal, because the king had shown unexpected strength. If he had been overcome it was only because the whole power of the house of Burgundy, of what was virtually an independent state, had been thrown into the scale; and even as it was, nothing but a combination of circumstances, unlikely to occur again, had led to his defeat. The king, even if he disregarded or evaded the treaty, had little reason to fear a renewal of the league. The gentry and the middle classes, whose support or neutrality had been so important to the confederates, now knew what the public good meant—total

[1] H. Martin. Hist. de France, vi. p. 571.

neglect of the national interests and of the reformation of abuses, increased taxation to defray the monstrous pensions and gifts extorted by the victorious princes, uncultivated fields and interrupted commerce, and a dismemberment of the monarchy, which would ensure allies and a basis of operations to the English or to any other foreign invader.

The King determined not to acquiesce in his Defeat.—Before the confederates separated, Lewis had already secretly but solemnly protested against the treaty he had been forced to sign. The Parliament and the Chambre des Comptes declared that they only consented to register it under compulsion. They pointed out that its provisions contravened the fundamental laws of the realm. Normandy was the inseparable appanage of the Crown; nor could a king of France submit himself in temporal matters to the censures of the Pope. The king did not hope to elude the performance of all the conditions to which he had subscribed. On the contrary, he trusted by satisfying to the full the ambition of some of his opponents to detach them from those whom he considered more formidable or irreconcilable. In this he was not disappointed. The selfishness of these men was so narrow that their solicitude did not even extend to the interests of their class.

Favours bestowed on the Duke of Bourbon and the Count of St. Pol.—The Duke of Bourbon had shown that he could be a dangerous enemy. His revolt had called the king away from the north at a most critical time. It was in great measure his adroitness which had placed the rebels in possession of Rouen. He had twice broken his engagements; but his conduct had not been marked by ingratitude such as that of Nemours or of Armagnac. Nor can we rightly

judge the statesmen of the fifteenth century unless we constantly bear in mind that then, if ever, fidelity to plighted engagements was reckoned foolish simplicity, and that men were willing to pardon and admire in others the dexterous treachery they were themselves prepared to practise. The traditions of chivalry and of Christian ethics commanded the homage of some hypocrisy, and honour, and loyalty continued in men's mouths. But to whatever country we look, whether to England or to France, to Spain or to Italy, we find among the ruling classes the same disregard of all honourable engagements, the same contempt of the ties which are usually held sacred, the same readiness to commit or condone crimes repugnant to the ordinary conscience of mankind.[2] Judged by the standard of his contemporaries, the Duke of Bourbon was a prince of integrity. He had served Charles VII. not unfaithfully: if he had attacked Lewis he had also received some provocation.[3] His power was considerable, and his position among the princes of the blood second only to that of the Duke of Burgundy. One of his brothers was Archbishop of Lyons, another Bishop of Liège. Yet his domains were scattered and open to attack on all sides, and his vassals had shown little zeal in supporting him against the royal authority. It was not therefore dangerous to increase his power and

[2] Chastellain, who generally is anxious only to see the merits of those in authority, in a fit of virtuous indignation exclaims, "Quand je regarde . . . la condicion des princes de la terre, comment en ce dont ung povre noble homme feroit grand pois et grand refus de commettre, eux, plus encore sont grands moins encore en font estime et dangier, et leur est amour ne honneur à vertu, certes je me rappaise moi-mesme, et par le naturel et commun usage de leur vie, je retire mon admiracion de leurs abus . . . tres grans princes coustumièrement sont à mal donnés aujourd' hui," and so on for a chapter, p. 481.

[3] See above, p. 59.

to secure his fidelity by concessions larger than he could have hoped to obtain from the jealousy of his allies. The king appointed him his lieutenant in all the south-eastern provinces, and Governor of Languedoc. The Count of le Maine was punished by the loss of that government for his equivocal behaviour during the war. On the death of the Lord of Montauban, the Bastard of Bourbon, a half-brother of the duke, was married to a natural daughter of the king, and created admiral. Nor did Lewis spare any pains to conciliate John of Calabria, renowned as the most chivalrous and honest prince of his time. He promised to assist him in his adventurous schemes of conquest, and affianced his infant daughter Anne, whom he had promised to Charolais, to the Duke of Calabria's son, Nicholas of Anjou. The Count of St. Pol, after obtaining the coveted honour of constable, began to yield to the king's blandishments. He wished to be independent, but in the meantime more was to be obtained from France than from Burgundy. He was also influenced by personal pique. He had fallen in love with Joan of Bourbon, a sister-in-law of Charolais, educated at the Burgundian Court. He was famous for his stately presence and magnificent dress, but he was near fifty, and the lady who would have accepted his son refused the father. Charles had insisted that her inclinations should be respected. Lewis consoled his wounded feelings by the hand of one of the princesses of Savoy, a sister of the queen. The county of Guise, the reversion of the county of Eu, the captaincy of Rouen, and other favours were bestowed upon him at the same time, or shortly after. The county of Eu had been promised to John of Nevers, but a man who had shown the inclination without the ability to betray him, possessed little claim to the consideration of Lewis.

Other ministers and officers, whose conduct during the war had been unsatisfactory or ambiguous, were dismissed, and in many instances replaced by the old servants of Charles VII., but this was done gradually, and with caution.

The Recovery of Normandy.—Even when anxious to purchase peace at any price, the king had hesitated to surrender Normandy, and it was the alienation of Normandy against which the Parliament had especially protested. This duchy was the most valuable and important province of the kingdom. It contributed one-third of the total revenue of the State. Its fertility was unrivalled, its inhabitants were brave and industrious. Whoever held Normandy commanded the navigation of the Seine, and could at any moment assemble an army at no great distance from Paris. Its harbours and coasts invited the descents of the English. To recover Normandy was therefore the first and great object of Lewis's policy. In this he was singularly assisted by circumstances. As soon as the allied princes separated, Charles of France, accompanied by his friend the Duke of Brittany, hastened to take possession of his appanage. His future subjects, glad to possess once more a duke and a court of their own, were prepared to receive him with some enthusiasm. When, however, he began to distribute the honours and profits of the new government, he found himself surrounded by difficulties and perplexities. There were three classes of claimants to the favours which the new duke could bestow. (1.) His own immediate followers, consisting for the most part of the old ministers and captains of Charles VII., who had attached themselves to him during the civil war. (2.) The Bretons, who considered that their master and his vassals had borne almost the whole expense and burden of the joint venture, and

that they deserved a proportionate share in its fruits. (3.) The native nobility and clergy who had brought about the defection of their province, and who had rebelled against the royal authority in the hope of obtaining greater power and consideration at the court of an independent sovereign of Normandy. The quarrels between these various parties were so violent that the princes hesitated to enter Rouen. The Count of Harcourt, the leader of the Norman nobility, declared that Duke Charles was a prisoner in the hands of Francis of Brittany. The populace of Rouen sallied forth under his guidance, and brought their Duke into the city by force. He went through the old form of espousing his duchy with the ducal ring, and was instructed in the old traditions of Norman independence and victory.

The Duke of Brittany and his advisers, alarmed and irritated by this hostile demonstration, fell back and occupied the principal towns of lower Normandy—Caen, Bayeux, Coutances, Avranches, and others. The king was ready to profit by the troubles which he had foreseen and perhaps prepared. He had assembled a considerable army, which now entered Normandy in three divisions; one under the Duke of Bourbon occupied the county of Evreux; another led by Charles of Melun overran the Vexin and the district of Caux; the third body was commanded by the king in person. He passed through Normandy, meeting with little or no resistance, and had an interview with the Duke of Brittany at Caen. The reception he had met with at Rouen disposed the duke to listen favourably to the overtures of the king. A treaty was concluded. The duke was neither to assist nor entertain in his dominions any enemy of the king. In return, he was to receive 150,000 crowns, and was confirmed in his regalian rights. Lewis also promised to protect his

person and duchy against all assailants, and to receive into favour Dunois, Dammartin, and others. The Duke of Normandy, abandoned by his cousin of Brittany, and expecting to be attacked in Rouen by his brother, entreated the Count of Charolais not to betray the common cause. But Charles was occupied in his own dominions, and contented himself with sending an embassy, which readily admitted the explanations of the king, who professed to have relieved his brother from a burden he was unable to sustain. The ambassadors returned, after begging the king to extend to his brother's followers an amnesty already granted. Charles of France proposed to refer the question of his appanage to the princes. The king suggested the arbitration of the Dukes of Bourbon and Brittany, and offered the county of Roussillon, of which his tenure was precarious, and which was far removed from the domains of his brother's confederates. The unfortunate prince asked in despair for a safe-conduct to visit and confer with the Duke of Brittany at Honfleur. His request was granted, and as soon as he had left Rouen, Lewis advanced to the gates of the city, which were opened by the inhabitants, on the assurance of a free pardon. Six persons only were excepted, men who had taken a leading part in the original betrayal of the city.

The Duke of Normandy, whose title was now a mockery, embarked with the intention of seeking a refuge at the Court of Burgundy; but an adverse wind compelled him to accept the invitation of the Duke of Brittany to accompany him into his dominions. This was a violation of the treaty so recently concluded at Caen, but the princes were wise after the event, and saw how simply they had been playing into the hands of their enemy.

Lewis, in the meantime, proclaimed by letters patent

that he resumed the government of his duchy of Normandy, inasmuch as it was inseparably attached to the Crown. He sent an embassy to the Count of Charolais to inform him of the considerations and circumstances which had determined his conduct. It is now time to show how it came that Charles so easily allowed the king to take back concessions wrung from him with such difficulty.

Liège and Burgundy.—The men of Liège, the old allies of France and enemies of Burgundy, had assisted Lewis in the late war with greater zeal than discretion.[4] He had promised that he would not consent to any peace in which they were not included. Although they are not mentioned by name in the treaty of Conflans, the first article stipulates "that all hostilities shall cease between the contracting parties, their vassals, allies, and adherents of every condition both within and without the kingdom," and further on it is provided "that no town or community shall be molested or suffer any diminution in their rights and privileges for adhering to either party." The king at the same time wrote to "his good and faithful allies," begging them to desist from further hostilities, lest they should forfeit the protection of the treaty, and he be unable to assist them. He cannot therefore justly be accused of utterly neglecting their interests;[5] but he was doubtless well satisfied that Charles should ignore the fact that Liège was implicitly included in the peace, since he thus obtained time to recover Normandy and to strengthen his position without Burgundian interference. Moreover, the Bishop of Liège, who was scarcely less hostile

[4] See above, p. 79.

[5] See also Comines, L. ii. ch. 2, "Les quels," &c., ambassadors of the king, "Signifièrent audit Duc de Bourgoyne comme les Liègeois estoient allyez du Roi et comprins en sa trefve," &c. Charles did not deny that they were included, but said they had deprived themselves of the benefit of the treaty by attacking him.

to the citizens than Charolais, was the brother of the Duke of Bourbon, whom he wished to conciliate at any price.

Liège lies on the borderland of the French and German speaking races, near to where the Meuse begins to change the varied beauty of its upper course for the featureless flatness of the Low Countries. It was the capital of an ecclesiastical principality, whose territory extended some distance up the river and over the wooded ridges and green valleys of the Ardennes. The town had originally sprung up round the tomb of St. Lambert—a shrine much frequented by pilgrims. A stately cathedral was dedicated to the saint, its chapter was wealthy and noble, and in the fifteenth century the city was still distinguished by the number and splendour of its sacred buildings. But Liège owed its prosperity and its importance to its situation in a basin rich in mineral treasures. Its streets were built over seams of coal, nor had the iron to be brought from far, which was smelted in the furnaces built at the mouths of the pits from which their fuel was obtained. The Prince Bishop of Liège was the vassal of the emperor, but his subjects had long considered the kings of France their natural protectors. It was in France that they found a market for their manufactures, from France that pilgrims came to the tomb of St. Lambert or to the sylvan shrine of St. Hubert. Difference of language and rivalry in trade separated them from their Dutch-speaking neighbours.

We hear, as early as the tenth century, of successful attempts on the part of the people of Liège, supported and directed by their bishops, to subdue the lords of the castles in their neighbourhood. A population of traders, artizans, and miners, were unlikely to submit to the pretensions of a feudal aristocracy. Nor was there a burgher oligarcy, as in many of the Flemish and German towns.

Every citizen was eligible to office if he could obtain a majority of the votes of the whole male population. Constitutional limits were imposed on the power of the bishop; but he was the sole fountain of law and justice. By suspending their administration he could paralyse the social life of the State, and by his interdicts annihilate its religious life. Yet the burghers were involved in perpetual disputes with their bishop. When the power of the Dukes of Burgundy was established in the Low Countries, it was to them that the latter naturally applied for assistance against their unruly flock. John the Fearless defeated the citizens with great slaughter in 1408. He himself reckoned the number of slain at 25,000. In 1431 Liège was compelled to pay a fine of 200,000 crowns to the Duke of Burgundy. Philip the Good attempted to compel them to assist him against the La Mark, "the boars of the Ardennes," their hereditary allies, and the leaders of the French party in their native province. But popular feeling ran so high, that even the bishop, though a creature of the Burgundian Court, began to show symptoms of independence. Philip inveigled him into Brabant, and when in his power compelled him to resign in favour of a brother of the Duke of Bourbon, a dissolute schoolboy of eighteen. His government proved, as was to be expected, foolish, reckless, and extortionate. Its injustice provoked not only the resistance of the populace, but even the remonstrances of the chapter and clergy. The bishop's reply was to suspend the law-courts and to lay the town under an interdict. The citizens appealed in vain to the Archbishop of Cologne, to the Papal legate, to the Pope. Trade was ruined, no justice could be obtained, and soon the consolations and sacraments of religion would be refused. The most violent democrat in the Middle Ages scarcely believed in an award which did

not proceed from a regularly constituted source, or in the possibility of reaching heaven without the formal intervention of the Church. Want, a sense of anarchy, and the fear of spiritual death, maddened the multitude. The moderate counsels of the chapter and of the wealthier citizens were set aside. Raes de la Rivière, Lord of Heers-Lintres, &c., a man of high position and noble birth, but of eager and unscrupulous ambition, was the adviser and leader of the populace. He compelled the clergy to perform their functions, under protest, in spite of the interdict, and the magistrates to open their courts. In order to obtain some foreign support, and to lessen the feeling of isolation which weighed down their courage, he persuaded the people to choose a brother of the Markgrave of Baden their "mainbourg," or defender. Marc of Baden was an alien in language, he had little influence with his kinsmen the German princes of the Rhine, and no personal power or ability. The La Marks, who imagined that they had an hereditary right to the office, were offended, and became neutral or hostile. Lewis had wished Nevers, his governor in Picardy, to have been elected, but Raes doubtless feared a rival in La Mark, a master in Nevers. The king, who was just beginning his struggle against the League of the Public Good, was annoyed at the choice; but could not refuse, whoever the mainbourg might be, the most ample promises of help and protection.

Alliance of Lewis XI. and Liège.—A treaty was signed on June 17, but nothing very serious was undertaken by Liège till after the report of a Burgundian defeat at Montl'héri. The news which occasioned much consternation at the Court of Burgundy was received with the wildest exultation. The citizens sallied forth, and after defying the Duke of Burgundy, devastated the neighbouring districts of Limburg and Hainault. Dinant,

the second town of the principality in wealth and importance,[6] offended the ducal family more deeply than by the sack of villages and burning of farms and of castles. Its inhabitants and those of Bouvines, a town of Namur, from which it was separated by the Meuse, hated each other with the hate of neighbours and rival traders. When it was announced that the King of France had won a great battle, the youth of Dinant, in the triumph of the moment, and rejoicing in an opportunity of insulting their neighbours, dragged a rude effigy of Charolais, a bell and halter round its neck, before the walls of Bouvines. "See here," they cried, "your Count of Charolais! A fine count; the bastard of our old Bishop Heinsberg, who went to make war against the King of France, and will be hung by him like a foul traitor as he is." After which they went away, leaving the figure dangling to a St. Andrew's cross, the badge of Burgundy, as to a gibbet. These idle words were reported at the ducal Court. It was clear that nothing less than the utter ruin of the offending town could satisfy the chastity of the pious Isabella and the honour of her son.

Meantime a truer report of events in France reached the people of Liège. Their mainbourg and his Germans deserted them. Their train-bands were defeated by the levies of the Duke of Burgundy, and they would soon have to encounter the victorious army of his son. Their discouragement was great. The populace now listened to the chapter and to the moderate citizens, who had taken no part in the excesses of Raes de la Rivière and his party, and besought them to do their best to obtain peace.

[6] As to the trade of Dinant, even with England, where its merchants enjoyed the same privileges as those of the Hanseatic League, its wealth, &c., see Kirk's Charles the Bold, vol. i. p. 343, 344, and Michelet's Hist. de France, vol. vi. p. 200.

Envoys were sent, but the duke refused to receive them; and they were informed that nothing could be definitely concluded till the Count of Charolais had returned. He was hurrying back by forced marches, and his army was increased by reinforcements which joined him on the way. Proclamation had been made that all who neglected to march against Liège would be treated as traitors. The troops had received no pay, the season was advanced, and the limits of feudal service had been far exceeded, yet few dared to murmur, for Charles expected the same implicit obedience from gentle as from simple, and punished all offenders by blows or death. As some slight compensation, his army was allowed to plunder the friendly districts through which it passed. When the frontiers of Liège were reached, a stricter discipline was enforced. It was not desirable by ravaging their estates to provoke the nobility to make common cause with the townsfolk. The Burgundian army encamped at St. Trond; 28,000 men-at-arms, besides numerous infantry, were reviewed by Charles in the presence of the ambassadors of the trembling city. It was uncertain whether Liège or Dinant would be the first object of attack. Charolais was not really in a position to attack either. The winter had begun; his army was ill provided and unpaid; but in their terror the people of Liège agreed to terms which might have been dictated after a successful siege.

The Piteous Peace.—They did, indeed, refuse to deliver any of their fellow-citizens to the vengeance of the count, but they consented to abandon Dinant. They lost their sovereign courts of justice and their jurisdiction over the bishopric, and they were forbidden to fortify their territory. An enormous fine was imposed.[7] The Duke

[7] 390,000 florins to the duke, 190,000 to his son. Probably not florins, but "mailles," a coin = ½ florin.

of Burgundy and his heirs were to be hereditary "mainbourgs" of the city, which engaged to renounce the alliance of France and to submit to the authority of its bishop. Such was the "Piteous Peace" of Liège, a peace from which Dinant was excluded. Nothing more could be attempted that winter, and Charles dismissed his troops with an intimation that their services would be again required in the summer.

Use made by Lewis of the Diversion afforded by Liège.—It would have been difficult for Lewis to have assisted Liège. He at any rate made the most profitable use of its sacrifice. Three days before Charolais signed the "Piteous Peace," he received letters in which Lewis explained to him how and why he had again entered into the possession of his duchy of Normandy. No allusion was made to the projected marriage of Charles with Anne of France. The Duchess Isabella, though herself of the house of Lancaster, eagerly advocated a proposal of Edward IV. that her son should marry his sister, Margaret of York; and Charles became more and more disposed to acquiesce in such an arrangement as his discontent with the conduct of Lewis increased.

Now that Normandy was recovered, the most immediate objects of the king's policy were to conclude a peace with England, and to deprive his enemies of the power of using the heir-apparent of the Crown as their instrument and as an ever ready means of annoyance. At the same time, he continued to replace those of his ministers whose conduct had been unsatisfactory with others in whose ability to see their own interest he could place more confidence. Dammartin, who had become the king's trusted adviser and general, understood that his services were paid with a liberality which made it worth his while to be faithful. Charles de Melun, whose doubtful guilt I have already

mentioned,[8] was disgraced. His execution may in great measure be attributed to the vengeance of Dammartin, whom he had unscrupulously persecuted and robbed.[9]

Antony de Châteauneuf, long the king's favourite, betrayed his secrets to Charolais. His treason was detected, and he was imprisoned in Usson, a castle belonging to the Bastard of Bourbon. The king ordered the prisoner to be shut up in an iron cage; but the bastard refused. "If the king," he said, "wishes to treat his prisoners like that, he had best keep them himself, he can then make them into mince meat if he chooses."

The Count of Dunois was appointed President of the Commission of Thirty-six, who, in accordance with the treaty of Conflans, had been chosen to redress the abuses of the Government. They proved a useful instrument to the king, supporting him in his attempts to maintain his sovereign jurisdiction over the districts he had been compelled to cede, and in his other disputes with Brittany and Burgundy. They did, indeed, venture to remonstrate against the unendurable load of taxation with which the people were oppressed. But this was the necessary result of the war of the public good. It was only by bribing and buying the great nobles and princes that Lewis could hope to preserve the kingdom from being dismembered. France paid heavily, but it was for the privilege of existence. The king did what he could to extend the area of taxation, and by encouraging trade and agriculture endeavoured to render the burden less crushing.

John of Calabria, as untiring and ambitious as his sister, Queen Margaret of England, was ever in want of money to carry out his schemes of conquest. The king had already gained his support by liberal gifts and by the promise of the hand of Anne of France for his son. He

[8] See above, p. 29. [9] See above, p. 71.

now received a gratuity of 120,000 crowns, and in return consented to visit Brittany and to persuade Charles of France to listen to reasonable terms. It was suspected that his real object was to seize the person of that prince, should he place himself in his power. But the caution and persistence of Charles and his advisers rejected all proposals, and gave no opportunity to the Duke of Calabria to perform his undignified and dishonourable task.

Alliance of the King of France and the Earl of Warwick.—The truce with England expired in June. Ambassadors were sent to negotiate its renewal, and their instructions were communicated to the Court of Burgundy. But it was well known that the King of France was anxiously cultivating the friendship of the Nevilles, and his ostentatious frankness did not disarm the suspicions of Charolais. English politics were becoming to no small extent a battlefield for French and Burgundian intrigues. Lewis had spared no pains to gain Warwick, who continued the advocate of a friendly policy towards France; while Edward IV., influenced by his wife and her relations, and more and more impatient of the ties which bound him to his too powerful supporter, inclined to an alliance with Burgundy—an alliance which was to be cemented by a double marriage, that of Charolais with Margaret of England, and of the Duke of Clarence with Charles's daughter, Mary. The Woodvilles and the king, who cannot have overlooked the probability of a conflict with the old Yorkist nobility, caught eagerly at the popularity to be gained among the trading classes by a close and mercantile alliance with the sovereign of the Low Countries, and at the hope of obtaining his support against their rivals. A peace with the French, the national enemies, offered no such inducements, even if Lewis, underrating, as it seems, the power and ability of Edward IV., had not relied too

exclusively on the friendship of Warwick. The French ambassadors succeeded, however, in the immediate object of their mission; the truce was prolonged for another year. The King of France had previously been actively collecting a considerable army, in case, as he declared, the English should resume hostilities.

The Count of Charolais, who was preparing to wreak his deferred vengeance on Dinant, alarmed and irritated at the armaments of the king, at his negotiations with Warwick, and at his restless intrigues on every side, endeavoured to excite public feeling against him by a letter so unreasonable and peremptory that it would seem to have been his own composition.

He declared that he had been credibly informed that Lewis had offered Rouen and the district of Caux, together with Abbeville and the county of Ponthieu, to the English as the price of their assistance against Burgundy. If such negotiations were going on, he begged that they might at once be broken off, in order that he might remain as he wished, the king's humble servant. Lewis referred the matter to the Commission of Thirty-six, who reminded Charles that the negotiations with England had been carried on openly and with his full cognisance; all the documents had been shown to him, and they demanded that he should give the names of those who had supplied him with information so false and so injurious to the honour of the king.

The count was somewhat embarrassed, and replied that he had only given utterance to fancies which had occurred to him owing to the ungenerous manner in which he had been treated by the king in regard to the lordship of Vimeu and other matters.

Siege of Dinant.—Scarcely six months' rest had been allowed to the Burgundian forces before they were again

assembled to march against Dinant and Liège; for the extreme party in the latter city had again seized the direction of affairs, had decapitated the principal authors of the "Piteous Peace," and refused to execute its provisions.

Dinant, which had reluctantly followed the more violent councils of Liège, found itself marked out for especial vengeance by the folly and licence of the dregs of its populace. The ruin of trade and manufactures filled the country with needy and desperate men, whose only resource was the plunder of the neighbouring districts. These lawless and reckless bands were guilty of excesses which the magistrates and graver citizens were unable to prevent or punish, and which supplied their enemies with a pretext for involving innocent and guilty in common ruin. All that the wealthier citizens, the men who had most to lose, could effect by their moderate and peaceful councils, was to paralyse the resistance which, if well directed and united, might have proved successful. The Duke of Burgundy, so weakened by illness that he could scarcely be moved on a litter, insisted upon accompanying the army which was to destroy Dinant. For several days the doomed town was exposed to the incessant fire of a powerful artillery. The walls, though nine feet thick and defended by eighty towers, were breached, the houses in ruins, and hundreds of citizens slain. The desperate outlaws, who had thronged the town and had prevented all attempts to avert destruction by timely submission, now made their escape, deserting, to the vengeance they had provoked, the inhabitants, whose fate was bound up with that of their homes and families. The assault was already ordered, when Dinant surrendered unconditionally. The various forms of horror which a sack presents were then seen; nor was their deformity excused by the heat and passion of conflict. The soldiers were quartered upon

the citizens in perfect order and discipline. It was only after the lapse of two days that they were allowed to plunder and murder their unresisting hosts. In one respect alone Charolais showed some sense of humanity: all violence to females was strictly forbidden and inexorably punished. The women, children, and priests were collected and sent away to the neighbouring towns. As they looked for the last time on the spot where their homes had been, they uttered one or two cries so pitiful that even the hardest hearts were moved. 800 men, whom the hostility of Bouvines had pointed out as most guilty, were tied together two and two, and thrown into the Meuse. The town itself was burnt and razed to the ground, "so that he who looked for it could only say, This is the place where Dinant was."

Renewed Submission of Liège.—Before the work of demolition was fully completed, the Burgundians were alarmed by the news that the men of Liège were advancing against them 40,000 strong. Charles collected his troops and moved to meet them: his advanced guard lost its way, and he found himself unexpectedly in the presence of the enemy. His troops were encumbered with booty, in disorder, and not prepared to resist a sudden attack. But the caution of the magistrates and leaders of the citizens led them to neglect the propitious opportunity, and to open negotiations. The multitude were cowed by the fall of Dinant, which they had trusted to relieve. It was agreed that the terms of the former treaty should be executed, that Liége should in six years pay 600,000 florins, and furnish annually 50 hostages till its liabilities were discharged. The first hostages were to be brought to the count on the next morning. They did not appear at the appointed time. The forces of the city were now in confusion, many departing, others in

disorder, all unprepared to meet an attack. The Marshal of Burgundy and the Lord of Contai advised Charolais to charge, and to secure an easy victory over his stiff-necked enemies. The Count of St. Pol had served against Dinant, though he had reminded Charles that it was the ally of the King of France, and under his protection; nor had he scrupled to share in the spoil. But he now appealed to the honour and chivalry of the prince, and exhorted him at least to inquire, before he attacked them, whether the enemy meant to abide by their plighted faith. After some hesitation he prevailed. By saving the militia of Liège from destruction, he deserved the pardon of the king for assisting in the expedition against Dinant, and remained true to his ambiguous policy, which dreaded equally the preponderance of either rival.

Death of Philip the Good—1467.—The ruin of Dinant was the last exploit of Philip the Good. After watching the work of vengeance from the walls of Bouvines, he was carried back to Bruges, where he lingered on till next summer. He had lived seventy-one years, and had reigned forty-eight. Good fortune, fraud, and cautious violence had raised him to an equality with the most powerful sovereigns;[1] yet it does not appear that the ability of Philip was above the average, while the

[1] We are, perhaps, liable to exaggerate the power of Burgundy. (1.) The ostentatious splendour of the Court, supported by the wealth and commerce of the Netherlands, appealed to men's imagination. (2.) The weakness of the Empire during the 15th century, the Anglo-French wars, and the exhausting domestic troubles which followed them, enabled the Duke of Burgundy to stand forth as the leader of the West in projects of crusade and the like. (3.) The rivalry of France and England enabled him to hold the balance of power, and the disturbed state of those kingdoms increased his relative strength. (4.) The self-assertion and restlessness of Charles the Rash imposed upon his contemporaries, while the caution of Lewis exaggerated the danger of a more vigorous policy, and increased the prestige of a rival whom he appeared so greatly to fear.

epithet by which he is distinguished bears witness not so much to his virtues as to the low standard of princely honour and duty which enabled his flatterers to bestow such a title without shame, and his subjects to acquiesce in it without irony. He was passionate, arbitrary, profuse, and licentious. But his dignified presence, gracious manners, and liberal magnificence, imposed upon the vulgar. His dominions enjoyed great commercial prosperity. The union of so many principalities under one ruler, the peaceful policy of the latter part of his reign, the ruin by war of the manufactures and trade of France, the destruction of the rival industries of the valley of the Meuse, the intimate alliance with England, contributed to enrich the great towns of the Netherlands, and disposed the wealthier citizens to forget constant encroachments on their liberties, and systematic contempt of their privileges.

That the death of Philip was sincerely lamented we may well believe: what the reign of his successor would be was already too well known. It had already commenced in all but name. Yet the funeral of the old duke was the visible sign that the good old times of peace and prosperity and merry-making had passed away, and in lamenting him his subjects perhaps thought most of the evil times to come.

Death of Lewis of Savoy and Francis Sforza.—The death of Philip had little political importance, but that of the Duke of Savoy was a serious blow to the schemes of Lewis XI.; for his successor, though married to a sister of the king, preferred the alliance of Burgundy. It is said that the duchess exerted herself to bring about a change so unsatisfactory to her brother—a new proof of the futility of political marriages. Lewis had lost in the previous year a far abler and more powerful, if not more useful, ally, his friend and mentor Francis Sforza; but

Galeazzo, who with many vices inherited some share of his father's ability, remained faithful to an honourable and profitable alliance.

Warwick at Rouen.—At the very time when the Duke of Burgundy lay dying at Bruges, the King of France had received the Earl of Warwick with extraordinary honours and pomp at Rouen. He had long been eager to meet the man who was supposed to direct the policy of England and her king. He trusted that his tact and address would persuade the earl of the advantages to be gained by a sincere and lasting peace. Nor was Warwick unwilling to listen to his blandishments. He was conscious that his influence was undermined. His enemies had secured the alliance of Burgundy. At the time of his visit to France, the bastard Antony of Burgundy, supported by the relations and friends of the queen, was negotiating the marriage of his brother Charles with the Lady Margaret. If therefore the earl wished to secure foreign support, and a refuge in case of reverse, he was forced to embrace the offers of the King of France. Similar reasons compelled Lewis to rest his hopes of peace with England on a good understanding with Warwick. The Lancastrian party as such was powerless. The Court faction, the enemies of the Nevilles, had from the first been the friends of Burgundy. But even if he had enjoyed full freedom of choice it may be questioned whether Lewis would not have preferred the friendship of the kingmaker. He valued his political skill and success; he probably over-estimated his power and underrated the resources of Edward. In any case he may have supposed that either Warwick would prevail, and the peace between the two countries would be secured, and the Burgundian intrigues baffled, or that if the earl found himself worsted at Court, England would again be involved in civil war, and her enmity and

her good will be alike worthless. Warwick, who had been received like an "Emperor of Grece," and his companions, who had been presented with gifts and allowed to help themselves to whatever caught their fancy in the shops of Rouon, were charmed by the affability and generosity of Lewis, and the truce was renewed in the name of Edward IV., but without his consent and against his wish. It was with difficulty that the French ambassadors who accompanied Warwick on his return could obtain an interview with the king. The irritation of the Burgundian Court at the dangerous alliance of Lewis and the great earl was intense. Chastellain naively expresses his disgust at a circumstance so monstrous and dishonourable.[2]

The Joyous Entry of Charles at Ghent.—Soon after his father's death, Charles visited Ghent to inaugurate his reign as Count of Flanders. He had borne arms against that city, but during his quarrel with his father it had given proofs of devotion and loyalty to his person. For Ghent, Philip had remarked, was ever loyal to the son of its sovereign, but never loyal to the sovereign himself. Before making his "joyous entry," Charles asked the magistrates whether there was anything to fear from the disposition of the populace. He was told that they might make some demands, but would be satisfied by the most moderate concessions; indeed, that it would be dan-

[2] He wonders how the King of France could treat with such condescending familiarity an Englishman, a man of crime and comparatively low estate, a wild boar of bestial extraction and nationality, "Et qui n'estoit bien sain de ventre et de nez," p. 489. He also accuses Warwick of cowardice, p. 485; but, p. 312, he had said, "Certes entre les grands hommes du monde, ce en est ung dont . . . on pent grandement et haultement éscrire tant en sens et en vaillance comme en clère fortune." Chastellain hates the English, a people of whom "no good can be written." It is instructive to compare the praise of the enlightened and politic Commines. The inhabitants of Rouen were rewarded for the attentions they had shown Warwick by the privilege of possessing noble fiefs.

gerous to flatter their expectations by too great liberality. The leading citizens suspected that the chief object of popular clamour would be the abolition of the "Cueillotte," an octroi duty levied on corn and other articles. This tax had been originally imposed after the peace of Gavre to defray the cost of the war and the fine which Ghent had been compelled to pay. But it was said that these sums had been collected many times over, less to the profit of the ducal treasury than to that of the wealthy citizens and magistrates through whose hands they passed. Although in the name of the city they begged Charles to restore the privileges and franchises which it had lost, these men were not very anxious that the "Cueillotte" should be abolished. And they were probably ignorant of the depth of the hopes and passions which stirred the multitude. The "joyous entry" of the duke was undisturbed by unwelcome demonstrations. But on the next day, the return of the "fools of St. Lieven," a band of drunken revellers, who on the anniversary of his death carried the body of that saint to the scene of his martyrdom, and honoured his memory by a coarse saturnalia of riot and excess, was the occasion of a threatening and tumultuary gathering. The offices where the "Cueillotte" was collected were levelled. The market place, where in former times the Arteveldes had assembled and ruled the fierce democracy of Ghent, was thronged with the armed craftsmen, drawn up under the forbidden banners of the various guilds. The duke, unrestrained by the advice of his councillors, and followed by his terrified attendants, rode into the crowd, thinking to overawe them by his presence and reproaches. He struck with his stick one man who seemed active in promoting disturbance. His danger would have been serious had not his passionate impulse been restrained by Lewis de Bruges, Lord of Gruthuse, one of the wisest of

his ministers. Yet the people of Ghent had ever reverenced the person of their count, and many of the more respectable guilds assured the duke that they were only assembled in his defence, and to restrain the licence of their more revolutionary fellow-citizens. Charles was at length extricated from the mob, whom he addressed from the balcony of the town hall. He yielded to the necessity of dissimulation. At the first friendly words spoken in Flemish, he was interrupted by loud cries of "Welcome." The good humour of the crowd was increased by the more explicit promises of Gruthuse, who spoke after his master. Charles was compelled to endure with a smile the insolence of a rude boor who climbed up to the balcony and explained amid the cheers and assent of the crowd the particular grievances which required remedy. We may well believe that the duke and his court wished themselves anywhere, "even in India." He was compelled to promise all that his rebellious subjects so sturdily demanded, and to yield with as good a grace as he could command, lest the citizens, doubting his sincerity and fearing his resentment, should insist upon keeping among them his young daughter Mary. For he had somewhat rashly brought her with him, as well as the treasures of plate and jewellery left by his father. Even after he had left the town, Charles found himself obliged to confirm the concessions which had been extorted. For his authority was resisted at Mechlin, Antwerp, and other towns in Brabant, while Liège, driven to despair by the pressure of the fine, and encouraged by the emissaries of Lewis, was again stirring. He did not conceal his wrath from his intimates. "It is the men of Ghent," he exclamed, "who have brought me into these straits. May God requite them. By St. George, if I live ten years not a few shall suffer for this!"

The King supports the Count of Nevers against the Duke of Burgundy.—John of Nevers advanced a claim [3] to succeed to the Duchy of Brabant before the Estates of that province, who were assembled at Brussels. His pretensions were encouraged by the king, who promised his energetic support. Nevers had more than once renounced his birthright, and was personally odious or contemptible: yet the towns of Brabant would have preferred a master less powerful than the Duke of Burgundy. Charles behaved with unusual discretion and moderation; the nobility supported him against Nevers, and the resistance of the towns was easily overcome, and not severely punished. The duke could now direct his whole strength against Liège, and exerted himself to bring to a conclusion negotiations whose aim was to unite Brittany, Burgundy, England, and whatever allies he could secure, against the enemy who span on all sides the webs of his intrigues.[4]

Lewis courts Paris.—Lewis was not less active in preparing for the conflict which appeared to be imminent. He continued to endeavour to secure the good will and support of the towns by wise enactments and large concessions. Not content with confirming the immunities bestowed on Paris during the last war, he lavished new marks of favour and confidence on all classes of its inhabitants. The only return he asked was that the citizens should enrol themselves under the banners of their sixty [5] guilds in his and their own defence. He demanded as a favour that they should avail themselves of a privilege which Ghent had extorted from its sovereign by violence. Sixty thousand citizens, more or less armed, were reviewed in the presence

[3] See Genealogical table.
[4] Chastellain calls Lewis "the universal spider."
[5] Sixty, sixty-one, or sixty-seven. The authorities do not agree.

of the queen and Court. At their head rode the king's favourite, Balue, whom the Pope had lately named cardinal, as a reward for his services in persuading the king to enact once more the revocation of the Pragmatic Sanction. When a prince of the Church was willing to expose himself to the merriment of more practised warriors, could even Parliament and University refuse to follow his loyal example? So great, indeed, was the zeal of the Parisians, that some were wounded in their too energetic endeavours to acquaint themselves with the use of arms. The king's affability and condescension knew no bounds. He supped with the citizens, stood godfather to their children, attended their weddings. The queen and the noble ladies of the Court visited their wives, in whose bathing parties they shared.[6]

During the previous year the population of Paris had been greatly thinned by a grievous epidemic. The king endeavoured to supply its ravages by the curious device of promising a free pardon to all criminals not guilty of treason who would settle in the town and its suburbs. We are not told what the respectable inhabitants thought of this method of increasing their numbers.

Liège again in Arms—1467.—The time was now come for Lewis to decide whether he would assist Liège. The inhabitants of that unhappy town were unable to pay the immense fine. The clergy, who possessed no small share of the wealth of the country, declared that the matter did not concern them: the partisans of Burgundy and of the prince bishop pleaded that they were exempt, and the dependent towns refused to bear

[6] To offer a warm bath to a guest seems to have been a usual attention. The "étuves," or bathing houses, were as numerous in Paris and the Flemish towns during the Middle Ages as in the East, and of very questionable reputation.

their share of the common burden. In the midst of the general distress and despair Raes de la Rivière and his most violent followers governed the city by a reign of terror. Many acts were committed which might well alienate our sympathies, were they not excused by the delirium of dying liberty. It is certain that the emissaries of Lewis encouraged the citizens to defy the Duke of Burgundy by promises of speedy and effective assistance. The French envoys were conducted to Herstall, the home of the Carlovings, and were invited to take possession of Brabant in the name of their master and of the Count of Nevers. Hui, where the bishop was living, had not shared in the guilt or punishment of Liège. But the citizens of the latter town insisted that it should pay its share of the fine, and proceeded to besiege it and their bishop. Charles had sent a body of Burgundian troops to garrison the town; but Lewis of Bourbon was unwilling to run the risk of falling into the hands of his rebellious flock, and persuaded the Burgundian commandant to escort him to the court of his master, leaving Hui to its fate. The duke was savagely indignant at the regard paid by his officer to the commands and fears of a coward priest. His ignominious flight from Ghent and the loss of Hui were not a glorious prelude to a new reign. Nothing, he was determined, should baulk him of his revenge, and the forces of his dominions were ordered to assemble at Louvain on the 8th of October. The king did what he could by way of negotiation for his friends. The war against these contemners of the spiritual authority of their bishop was almost a crusade. Yet the Papal legate now interceded on their behalf. This intercession was part of the price paid by the Vatican for the renewed attempts of the king to induce the Parliament to sanction, and the University to acquiesce in, the abolition of the

Pragmatic Sanction. Cardinal Balue and the Constable St. Pol were sent to persuade Charles to agree to a truce in which Liège should be included, or at least to defer his vengeance. Lewis hoped that St. Pol would play the part —difficult as it was for one actor to sustain—which he had before entrusted to the Croïs and Nevers. He was by his power and connections to support the royal authority in Picardy and the neighbouring provinces, and to influence the duke by his personal credit and long established position at the Burgundian Court The French envoys were unable to make any impression on the obstinate resentment of Charles.

Dammartin urges the King to assist Liège.—Dammartin, who was at the head of 400 lances and 6,000 archers in the north of Champagne, urged Lewis to allow him to march to the assistance of Liège. His advice was in accordance with the dictates of honour and of sound policy. Dammartin's army would have been sufficient to save Liège; indeed, it will be seen that a smaller force might have sufficed. Meantime the king, whose troops were ready for action and in excellent order, might have compelled the Duke of Brittany to withdraw his support from Charles of France, and have forced the latter to accept such an appanage as he was willing to bestow. If, at the same time, Charles had been defeated on the Meuse, the victory would have been complete; even if he had proved the stronger, his army, after an arduous campaign in midwinter, would have been unable to keep the field, and Lewis need not have dreaded to excite his resentment, since his enmity was already active, and would have been less formidable had the power of Brittany been crushed. But, on the other hand, Lewis feared a renewal of the League of the Public Good—a prospect all the more alarming on account of the unsatisfactory

state of his relations with foreign powers. Castile, so long the ally of France, was now scarcely less hostile than Aragon. Savoy had deserted the French alliance, and 2,000 English soldiers were assembled at Calais, ready to join the Burgundian army in case Lewis should assist Liège. The princes of Bourbon and John Duke of Calabria and Lorraine, the hero of the house of Anjou, had indeed been conciliated, and their fidelity highly bought. But the Duke of Lorraine was warring in Catalonia, and the fidelity of the Duke of Bourbon had not been proved. Dammartin and the veteran Dunois showed great zeal in the royal service, but why should they prove more faithful than Nemours and Armagnac, who were again plotting against their benefactor, and inviting the King of England to invade Guienne? Lewis had been so often betrayed that it is not strange if he felt little confidence in the instruments he was compelled to employ. Yet the advocates of a more vigorous policy may have pointed out—(1.) That the enmity of the Spanish powers could not be formidable, since the King of Aragon was engaged in an obstinate and doubtful struggle with the Catalans,[7] and Castile was convulsed by the civil war which had been provoked by the vices and follies of Henry IV. (2.) That the firm alliance of the Duke of Milan might

[7] After the death of Don Carlos (see p. 42), the Catalans renounced their allegiance to King John, and declaring that the Aragonese sovereigns might lawfully be deposed for misgovernment, offered the crown to Don Pedro of Portugal, a descendant of the house of Barcelona. Their choice was unfortunate, and King John was on the point of victory when Pedro died. The Catalans then applied to René of Anjou, who could advance pretensions by the female line to the throne of Aragon. He was too old to accept so burdensome an honour; it was transferred to his adventurous son John of Calabria, who assembled an army of 8,000 men, and was supplied with money by Lewis. He crossed into Catalonia from Roussillon. His courteous and chivalrous bearing, his bravery and success, won the hearts of his new subjects.

compel the neutrality of Savoy. (3.) That symptoms of approaching troubles were not wanting in England, and that the probable preponderance of Warwick would be the sure guarantee of a peaceful policy. (4.) That the treachery which the king feared would be encouraged by an inaction which could be interpreted as weakness by his enemies, while his friends would be discouraged by the abandonment of ancient and faithful allies. (5.) That the revival of the League of the Public Good was an impossibility. Charles of Burgundy was more and more taking up the position of a foreign enemy rather than that of the leader of a domestic faction. If he invaded France as the ally of the English the whole nation would rise against him. These considerations appear so cogent, that, since they did not determine Lewis, we cannot but believe him to have been influenced by reasons we are unable to appreciate.[8] Yet we shall see him at other times, after completing all preparations for a vigorous and straightforward policy, shrink back at the moment of action into intrigue and indecision.

Dishonourable Proposal of the King.—St. Pol was sent back to the Duke of Burgundy to propose a dishonourable compromise. The king would abandon Liège to the vengeance of Charles, if he in turn might be free to attack the Duke of Brittany without fear of Burgundian interference. When St. Pol reached the duke he found him in arms and about to mount his horse. He rejected the proposed bargain, and added that he expected the king would not molest Brittany. "My lord," exclaimed St. Pol, "you do not choose, you take all. You

[8] The advice of Balue was doubtless of some weight with the king. This unprincipled intriguer, even if not already actually a traitor, only gave advice which flattered the king's prejudices, and besides, would advocate a peaceful policy from jealousy of Dammartin.

insist upon making war on our friends, while we are to sit still without attacking our enemies. It is more than the king can be expected to endure." "The men of Liège," Charles replied, "are assembled, and I expect a battle within three days; if I lose it, you will do as you please; if I win, you will not meddle with the Bretons." At the same time, he gave St. Pol to understand that he was playing an ambiguous and dangerous part; that he was his subject, constable by his favour, and that a collision between France and Burgundy would be little to his advantage. The count, it is said, tried to propitiate him by professions of good will, and by promises that he would ensure the inactivity of the French forces for at least twelve days. By the consent of Balue, a truce for six months was agreed upon, from which Liège was excluded. It was ratified by the king, who had just heard that Charles of France and the Bretons had attacked Normandy, and would therefore lose the benefit of the armistice. He practically obtained what he had proposed—an opportunity of attacking his enemies in the west, while abandoning Liège to the arms of Burgundy.

Battle of St. Tron.—The duke took the field on the 18th of October with an army which is said to have amounted to 100,000 men—a number which doubtless includes the camp followers. He was persuaded to spare the fifty hostages whose lives had been forfeited by the refusal of their countrymen to observe the treaty. The Lord of Humbercourt, one of the wisest of his councillors, pointed out that it was more politic, as well as more humane, to dismiss them, exacting a promise that they would do their utmost to persuade their townsmen to submit, and would take no part in the war on pain of death if recaptured. The duke first invested St. Tron, a town in the district called the Hasbain, which was defended by 3,000 men

sent from Liège under command of a knight whose valour and judgment are praised by his enemies.[9] The people of Liège were true to their national saying, "Who comes into the Hasbain may prepare for battle the next day." 20,000 men hastened to succour St. Tron, and to offer battle to the besiegers. They were accompanied by an agent of the king, who encouraged them by constant promises of help. The wife of Raes de la Rivière rode among the captains, and did more than they to excite the enthusiasm and valour of the army. Charles felt how much depended on the successful issue of the first battle of his reign. A plan of action was debated and agreed upon with his wisest captains. It was committed to writing, and he held it in his hand as he rode along the lines of his army on the morning of the battle. Never again did he show so much conduct and prudence. The battle and its results are graphically described by Commines (Liv. II. chap. ii.) The men of Liège were routed, but their loss was small, for night and a marshy country intersected by ditches protected their flight. But their courage and self-reliance were broken. The judicious historian takes the opportunity to insist upon the wisdom of avoiding, when possible, the risk of a pitched battle, the loss of which is sure to entail such disastrous consequences. His remarks are highly interesting, since they doubtless express the views of his friend and master, whose disinclination to stake the success of his plans on the chances of war they illustrate and explain.

St. Tron held out three days longer, affording time to Liège to prepare against a siege. There can be no doubt what the issue of such a siege would have been. It was

[9] Ol. de la Marche, p. 515, "Regnaud de Rouvray . . . lequel se conduisit en ce qu'il avoit en charge sagement et honorablement et gardant sa loyauté et son parti," &c., &c. The tone of the old courtier La Marche seems to be worth notice.

midwinter. The rains had been excessive, and the country was a quagmire. The Burgundian army was so ill provided that Commines assures us that Charles must have retreated in the course of two or three days. Yet it is probable that his obstinacy would have persevered till retreat had become disastrous. But Liège was deserted by its ally. The moderate party had ever been averse to resistance. Raes and his friends were discredited among the populace by the loss of the battle of St Tron. The chapter and the clergy treated in the name of the city; they stipulated for immunity from fire and pillage, showing themselves more anxious to secure their property than the lives of their fellow-citizens.

Submission and Harsh Treatment of Liège.—Three hundred of the most respectable burgesses, bareheaded and barefooted, brought the keys of the city to the duke. In the night the popular party made a last attempt to rouse their fellow-townsmen to resistance. They were foiled by the prudence of Humbercourt, who had been sent to occupy one of the gates, and who made good use of the services of some of the hostages whose lives he had saved. The walls were breached, the ditch was levelled, and the gates lifted off their hinges in order that the duke might enter the city in triumph at the head of his troops. For some days the unhappy town was kept in suspense. At length the citizens were assembled, surrounded by the threatening lines of the victorious army, to learn their fate from the lips of their conqueror. The terms which he granted were harsh. Yet he cannot be accused of wanton bloodshed. Twelve men only were excepted from the general amnesty;[1] of these only nine were executed, and

[1] But several thousands of those most obnoxious to the duke had fled; their property was confiscated. Had they remained the number of executions would probably have been much greater.

the nine were hostages whose lives were justly forfeited, since they had broken the conditions on which they had been spared. But Liège lost all its privileges, its laws, its customs, its corporation, and its guilds. Even the sovereign jurisdiction of the bishop was abolished. Magistrates were indeed to be appointed by him, but they were to take an oath of allegiance to the duke, and to judge according to "written reason."[2] Their decisions could be appealed against to the courts at Namur, Louvain, and Maestricht. The fortifications of the town were to be razed, and its munitions of war surrendered. In addition to the 600,000 florins of the former treaty, 115,000 golden "lions" were to be paid as an indemnity. Humbercourt was left to superintend the execution of these conditions. Charles carried away as a trophy the palladium of Liège, the "péron," a brazen column surmounted by a gilt fir cone, which stood in front of the town hall on a pedestal of several steps, from which the decrees and ordinances of magistrates and people were published. It was set up in the Exchange of Bruges, a warning to those who might be tempted to assert too boldly the privileges and liberties gained by the patriotism of their fathers.

The Duke's Authority strengthened by the Defeat of the Men of Liège.—Charles was not long before he began to reap the fruits of his victory. Ghent, conscious that it had provoked his resentment, voluntarily surrendered the concessions so rudely obtained, and tamely submitted to new and exorbitant taxes. The Estates of Brabant, Hainault, and Flanders were com-

[2] *i.e.*, According to the civil instead of customary law. The ministers whom Charles most employed were jurists of Burgundy and the Franche Comté, skilled in Roman jurisprudence and the traditions of imperialism. He was not less arbitrary and not less opposed to the traditions of feudal monarchy than his rival.—See Michelet, vol. vi. p. 252.

pelled to vote enormous sums of money under the name of the feudal aids due to the lord on the occasion of his succession and marriage. But these sums were to be paid in yearly instalments extending over sixteen years, and constituted therefore a permanent and independent source of revenue. The income thus obtained was to defray the ordinary expenses of government. The treasure left by the Duke Philip and the sums paid by Liège were to constitute a reserve for occasions of emergency. The power of the purse, the great foundation of absolute government, was thus secured. It now remained to follow the example of France, and to establish a standing army. But Charles seems at first to have endeavoured to maintain his army by straining to the utmost the feudal obligation of military service,[3] and by enlisting Italian and English mercenaries.

Severity of the Government of Charles.—Next to achievements and exploits in war, says Chastellain, the household of a prince is that which attracts our attention, and the fair management of which is most important. Charles, after a minute investigation of his finances, proceeded to organise his Court on a sumptuous and elaborate scale.[4] Yet his magnificence was as unpopular as the parsimony of the French king. It did not proceed from a generous and liberal disposition, but from a haughty sense of what was due to his own pre-eminent rank and dignity. He was far less profuse than Lewis in the gifts and rewards which he bestowed on his courtiers, and exacted the most careful and punctilious service. The banquets and tournaments might attract even strangers to his Court, but the long audiences and the sermons which

[3] Michelet, vol. vi. p. 253.

[4] Chastellain, p. 445, &c., Ol. de la Marche, ii. 480, &c., Barante, viii. 378, Kirk, i. 454, &c., enlarge complacently on the splendour and ceremonial of the Burgundian Court.

he preached to his attendants on the obligations of high birth and chivalry seemed tedious and superfluous. Three times each week he held a solemn audience, at which he would receive the petitions and complaints of any, even of the humblest, of his subjects. Like Lewis, he had a provost-marshal, scarcely less feared by offenders than Tristan L'Hermite, whose summary and arbitrary executions he imitated. It was not long before Charles had an opportunity of displaying his severe and impartial justice. A young noble, a bastard son of the Lord of Condé, appealed to an ecclesiastic, who was looking on, to decide a disputed chase at tennis. The decision was not what he expected. He rushed after the umpire with drawn sword, swearing that he would be avenged. The terrified priest fled closely followed along the street into the house of a brother, and escaped by a back door. His pursuer demanded with threats where he was concealed. The brother fell on his knees praying for mercy; one blow struck off his hands, which were raised in supplication, another stretched him lifeless. The duke declared the murderer should be punished. The Flemish nobility vainly besought him to pardon a youth whose accomplishments and chivalrous bearing were the pride of their order. Meantime the culprit passed his time feasting and drinking;[5] it was impossible, he thought, that a member of such a family as his should be executed for so trifling an offence. The general compassion for the murderer felt not only by his own class, but also by that to which his victim belonged, and the conviction scarcely concealed by

[5] Il s'étoit tenu joyeux . . . il ne pouvoit croire que si jeune et appartenant à si noble famille son seigneur pût le faire mourir *pour un cas si graciable*, &c., &c., Chastellain, 459. He was taken to the scaffold clad in his bravest attire, followed by the pitying mob and by a number of young women, who clamoured for the privilege of saving the criminal's life by marrying him at the place of execution.

the courtly historian that his punishment was unduly severe, are curious indications of the violent and brutal manners of the time.

Although Charles was not less persevering and successful in his efforts to establish his Government on a new and despotic basis than the contemporary rulers of France, of England, and of Spain, and although the traditions of imperial absolutism developed by the house of Austria were already cherished by its maternal ancestor, he still continued to pose as the champion of feudalism and of chivalry, as a King Arthur or a Charlemagne, among his peers. A Chapter of the Golden Fleece was held at Bruges with more than customary pomp. The old accusation of sorcery against Nevers was revived. As he did not think it prudent to appear, his escutcheon was effaced and his banner torn down. The Croï, on the other hand, who begged that the charges brought against them might be investigated, were told that they amounted to that of treason, which the Chapter was not competent to judge. Five years later Antony de Croï, then nearly ninety years old, threw himself at the duke's feet and obtained a reluctant and ungracious pardon. Among the new knights were Edward IV. and Philip of Savoy, who had been released by Lewis. Neither the favours of the King of France, nor an oath which he had sworn to bear no malice, prevented the latter from being one of the most active promoters of the league against him.

The Bretons Invade Normandy.—While the Duke of Burgundy had been engaged in subduing Liège, Lewis had been occupied in defending himself against the active aggression of his brother and of Francis of Brittany. The Duke of Alençon had admitted Breton garrisons into the towns of his duchy, and recognised Charles of France as his suzerain. Caen, Bayeux, and the Cotentin were

also occupied. St. Lo repulsed the enemy. A poor woman set the example of resistance, slaying several of the assailants with her own hands. She was richly rewarded by Lewis. The Marshal Loheac, with a considerable army, was at once sent against the Bretons, He easily regained possession of the duchy of Alençon, since he was assisted by the inhabitants and even by the Count of le Perche, the son of the duke, who were disgusted by the insolence of the invaders. But the news of the battle of St Tron, and of the surrender of Liège, alarmed the king and determined him to treat. An armistice was concluded. The allies were to retain possession of the towns they held in Lower Normandy till some arrangement could be made about the appanage of the Duke Charles. A pardon was again offered to Alençon, who had begun his rebellion by causing a poor man who had given evidence against him to be murdered, although at the time of his trial he had sworn to do him no harm. The Duke of Brittany continued none the less to do his utmost to introduce the English into Normandy. He signed a treaty with Edward IV., engaging to put him in possession of thirty towns and fortresses in return for the assistance of 3,000 archers. But Edward, who at no time was very ambitious of foreign conquest, was fully occupied with domestic politics and pleasures; nor did he feel much confidence in his allies. He assured Concressault, an agent of Lewis, that he considered Charles of France a young madman.

The States General of Tours—A.D. 1468.—Nor was the king more sincere in his promise to submit the question of his brother's appanage to the arbitration of the princes. He was meditating a move of masterly boldness and consummate skill. He determined to appeal to the nation for support in a struggle which con-

cerned the unity and even the existence of the State. The representatives of the three estates, who had not sat for thirty years, were summoned to meet at Tours at the end of March. The session was opened by the king with great and unusual pomp on the first of April. Most of the great nobles who had been summoned by writ were present, or had sent representatives. But the men who were at the time preparing for civil war had not hesitated to attend the meeting of notables in 1465 with professions of the profoundest loyalty in their mouths. Lewis must have regarded with greater complacency the numerous and well-affected representatives of 64 towns.[6] His chancellor, William Juvenal des Ursins, who had been reappointed to the office which in the late king's reign he had held since 1445, explained the reasons which had moved the king to assemble the States. His speech was conceived in the taste and eloquence of the time. He reminded his hearers how "that noble Emperor Joshua, king of the children of Israel, after he had been ordained king and had received the government of the said realm, assembled the three estates thereof, and put to them the same question which our sovereign Lord now puts to us. They then answered, 'All that thou commandest us we will do; and whoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment he shall die the death.' Thus, methinks, should we reply to the king; comforting and assisting

[6] Each town sent three representatives, of whom one was in orders the other two lay. Some writers suppose that one of these laymen was a commoner, the other noble. This does not seem improbable. Clergy, nobles, and burghers voted together at the election of these representatives. It is to be noted that the clergy and nobility as such did not send representatives to the meeting of the Estates. The bishops and great nobles were summoned individually by writ. Some historians have seen in this distinction between the elected members and those summoned by the king the rudiments of an upper and lower house.

him with our bodies and our goods, and serving him loyally in all that it shall please him to order and command." He then cited texts from the Scriptures, from the civil law, from poets and philosophers, proving that the obedience of subjects should be unconditional, inasmuch as their bodies and their estates belong to the prince. Finally, he set before them the three points, concerning which the king required their good advice and counsel. These were—(1.) The question of the appanage of the Duke Charles; (2.) The acts of hostility to the king committed by the Duke of Brittany; (3.) The negotiations and treaty of the said duke with the English, whom he sought to introduce into the kingdom by surrendering into their hands the places he held in Normandy.[7] The king and his council then left the Estates to deliberate. They met seven or eight times to determine how they should answer touching the matters propounded by the chancellor. The three orders sat together.

Some murmurs were heard. The drain of the wealth of the country to Rome since the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction; the grievous amount of taxation,[8] though not its unconstitutional and arbitrary character; the monstrous pensions, too often the reward of successful treason, were the themes of some muttered complaints, which we with difficulty trace among protestations of loyalty and devotion.

[7] Chastellain, p. 455, says the king "en propre person et de son propre sens fit une très-belle et notable relacion." But there is no record of this in the report of the proceedings of the States. Though this report is imperfect, it does not seem likely that so capital a fact as a speech from the king in person would have been passed over. M. de Sismondi (vol. xiv. p. 247) supposes that he spoke after the chancellor.

[8] The taille alone—which amounted to 1,800,000 francs after the recovery of Normandy and Guyenne—had been doubled. It now amounted to upwards of 3,600,000 francs.

The Address of the Estates.—In their formal address to the king, the Estates expressed themselves in terms which he might himself have chosen. (1.) Regarding Normandy, they unanimously declared, "That nothing under heaven, neither favour nor brotherly affection, nor the obligation of any promise, nor pretence of gift nor provision, nor fear nor threat of war, nor regard to any temporal danger, ought now or ever to move the king to agree to the separation of that duchy from the Crown." That as to the appanage of the Duke Charles, the wise ordinance of Charles V. had determined that a settlement of lands producing a revenue of 12,000 livres should be made on younger sons of the king; that, therefore, the offer of 60,000 livres made by Lewis to his brother was extremely liberal. (2.) That nothing could excuse a vassal who warred against his suzerain; and (3.) that the treaty of the Duke of Brittany with the English was wholly damnable, pernicious, fraught with evil consequences, and in no wise to be endured or tolerated. They concluded by declaring that whenever any vassals of the king thus forgot their duty, the Estates agreed and assented that the king, without waiting to assemble the States General, inasmuch as they could not easily be assembled, should do what justice required; the Estates engaging to serve and assist the king, to obey him to the utmost of their power, and to live or die with him in his quarrel. This ready abdication of their power is an instance of the political apathy, and of the readiness to submit to authority, however illegal if apparently beneficial, which has always characterised the French middle classes. The king thanked the Estates for their loyal care and support; he assured them of his wish to provide for the just government of his realm, and begged them to appoint a commission who should draw up ordinances for

the correction of abuses. The deputies showed their sense of his gracious language by naming such commissioners as were most likely to be agreeable. At their head were Cardinal Balue and the Count of Dunois. It was improbable that such a body would be importunate in its zeal for reform, and speaking in the name of the Estates, it might prove a convenient instrument of policy.

One great reform was accomplished about this time. By letters patent, dated October 1467, the king declared that henceforth "we will bestow no office unless it be vacant by the death of the holder, or be forfeited by him after judgment duly and justly passed by a competent court." Charles V. had already granted to the members of the higher courts the privilege of filling up vacancies by election. Their independence was complete now that they could not be dismissed at the pleasure of the Crown. By degrees the judicial offices became hereditary, first by collusive elections, and then openly and avowedly. The mediæval tendency to change all offices and functions into hereditary possessions thus triumphed in the French courts of justice after the close of the Middle Ages.[9]

Dissatisfaction of the Duke of Burgundy.—The Estates before separating had appointed a deputation to communicate their resolutions to the Duke of Burgundy. They entreated him to employ his power and authority for the good and the peace of the kingdom. But Charles was at no pains to conceal his anger, and "gave the envoys no good words." He was about to celebrate his marriage with Margaret of York, and felt confident of the support of England. Shortly afterwards the king sent St. Pol to confer privately with Charles. Bruges was crowded with strangers and with ambassadors who were come to witness the duke's marriage. The vanity of the constable could

[9] Martin. Histoire de France, vii. 33.

not resist the temptation of displaying his state before so many spectators. He entered the city as if he had been the lord of the land, preceded by his trumpeters and the sword of constable borne before him. The duke was so offended by this ill-timed ostentation that he at first refused to receive St. Pol. The constable's apology that it was his privilege to enter in such wise any town of France, even though the king himself were present, was scarcely calculated to propitiate Charles, who was thus reminded that even in his capital he was a vassal. After an unsatisfactory interview, St. Pol packed his trumpets and banners in his boxes and quietly left Bruges.

Marriage of Charles and Preparations for War.—Burgundian influence was in the ascendant in England. Warwick was apparently unprepared to resent his defeat in the council, or was waiting for an opportunity of more complete revenge. He returned to the Court. The Lady Margaret, on her way to embark for Flanders, rode pillion behind him through the streets of London. The wedding was celebrated with extreme magnificence at Bruges (July 2d). As soon as the festivities were concluded Charles left his bride to collect in Holland the aids due on the occasion of his marriage, and to prepare for an attack on Lewis in conjunction with his allies Edward of England and Francis of Brittany.

At the meeting of the English Parliament in May the chancellor had declared that it was the king's intention to recover the Continental possessions of his ancestors.

The King attacks Brittany.—The truce between France and Burgundy expired July 15th. Charles had ordered his forces to assemble on the frontiers of Picardy. The roads in every direction were covered by long trains of artillery and of carts conveying supplies for the army; but the duke was not as yet prepared to commence opera-

tions, and allowed the truce to be prolonged to the end of the month. The superior organisation of the French had enabled Lewis to assemble an army so powerful that he would have had little to fear from an offensive movement on the part of the Burgundians; and at the same time to collect an imposing force on the frontiers of Brittany. One division under the Marquis of Pont, the son of John of Calabria, invaded the duchy, stormed Champtocé, and besieged Ancenis, while another division commanded by the Bastard of Bourbon drove the Bretons from the towns they occupied in Normandy, and joining the Marquis of Pont under the walls of Ancenis assisted to reduce that town. The Duke Francis had not expected so vigorous an attack. There was no prospect of speedy aid from Burgundy or England. Even if Charles had been disposed to violate the truce, he was less prepared for active operations than Lewis; while Edward IV.'s schemes of foreign aggrandisement were paralysed by the landing of Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, the half brother of Henry VI., in Wales, by the fear of a Lancastrian rising, and by the ill-concealed discontent of the Nevilles. Many of the Breton nobles themselves were averse to a war the object of which was the restoration of English dominion in the west of France. Odet D'Aydie, the Gascon favourite of the duke, was in the pay of Lewis. After an urgent and ineffectual appeal for immediate assistance to the Duke of Burgundy, Francis of Brittany concluded a separate peace with the king (Sept. 10). He agreed to relinquish the alliance of England and Burgundy. The appanage of Charles of France was submitted to the arbitration of the Duke of Calabria and the Chancellor of Brittany. Till they pronounced their award the Duke of Calabria was to hold the fortresses taken by either party during

the war, and a pension of 60,000 francs was to be paid by the king to his brother.

Lewis Endeavours to Treat with Charles.—Charles had just crossed the Somme and was about to open the campaign, when the news of the defection of his ally, the Duke Francis, was brought by the Breton herald. He at first declared that the despatches were forgeries substituted by Lewis for the original documents, and threatened to hang the unhappy officer-at-arms for his supposed complicity. Lewis might now have attacked the Burgundians with every chance of success. Liège, driven to despair by the impossibility of paying the enormous fine which was ruthlessly exacted, was preparing for a last struggle. The great towns of the Netherlands were irritated by exorbitant taxation and attacks on their liberties, even the nobility were alienated by their master's rigorous and arbitrary disposition. The French army, on the other hand, was confident and eager for action, the nation united in its hostility to the great vassal who defied his sovereign, troubled the peace of the kingdom, and by his alliance with Edward IV. showed that he did not shrink from renewing the horrors of the English wars. Loheac, Rouault, Dammartin, the ablest commanders, urged their master to throw himself on the enemy. But Lewis only listened to his own firm resolve never to attempt by force what might be obtained by intrigue, to the ignoble suggestions of Balue, and to the interested advice of St. Pol. Now that the anger of Charles was kindled against his allies he might be persuaded to abandon their interests. If only a separate peace could be concluded with Burgundy, Lewis hoped to compel his brother to accept whatever he might choose to bestow, and to extort some pledge of future good behaviour from Francis of Brittany. His army was the stronger, his position in all

respects the more favourable, yet the king offered such conditions as he might have tendered after a disastrous campaign. The execution in full of all the terms of the treaty of Conflans, so far as they regarded Burgundy, and 120,000 crowns for the expenses of the duke's army. It is even said, though the fact is doubtful, that, as an earnest of his sincerity, he paid half that sum almost before negotiations were opened.

It was a peculiarity of the king's nervous and excitable temperament ever to suspect the intelligence, the zeal, or the honesty of his agents. His letters to them express all the feverish restlessness of a man who can believe nothing to be well done which he does not himself superintend. He is impatient of every appearance of delay, and in his eagerness to obtain his ends is persuaded that every obstacle which he does not himself feel exists only in the fancy or is caused only by the clumsiness of others. He had also, as we have more than once noticed, an exalted opinion of his own diplomatic skill. Many messengers came and went, yet Charles hesitated to accept peace on terms so greatly to his advantage. If he could but see him the king felt certain he might end this uncertainty, perhaps even obtain more favourable concessions. When once the idea of a personal interview had possessed him he was deaf to the warnings and entreaties of Dammartin, and of his more prudent or honest advisers. Balue encouraged his master by flattery of his adroitness and craft. St. Pol, who at first had attempted to dissuade the king, began to busy himself to bring about an interview when he found that the probable alternative was war. Balue was afterwards accused of having purposely betrayed his benefactor into his enemies' hands, but if there was any premeditated treachery, Charles himself must from the first have intended to break his

plighted word and to abuse the confidence of his guest Of such intention there is no evidence, nor is it in itself probable. He did not seem anxious to meet the king and when at length he yielded to the representations of the king's envoys, he sent a safe-conduct in the most explicit terms, "Sire, if it be your pleasure to visit this town of Péronne to confer with us, I swear to you, and promise by my faith and on my honour that you may come, stay, and return at your good pleasure . . . without let or harm . . . *notwithstanding any cause that may now be or hereafter may arise.*

Lewis at Péronne.—After receiving this assurance, Lewis might fairly suppose that he had nothing to fear. He had before trusted himself safely to Charles's honour. Nor had he himself abused the chance which once delivered his rival into his hands unprotected by promise or oath. He therefore set out at once for Péronne, accompanied only by some 80 archers of his Scotch guard and by his personal attendants, by the Duke of Bourbon, and his two brothers, the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons and the Admiral, by the Constable, and by Balue, and a few others of his Court. He was met at the frontier by a Burgundian escort under Philip de Crèvecœur, and he found Charles himself waiting to receive him at the banks of a little river not far from Péronne. The princes greeted each other with respect on the one side, and with hearty affection on the other. They entered the town side by side, the king's arm resting on his kinsman's shoulder. The Castle of Péronne was small and inconvenient, the king was therefore lodged in the house of one of the richest citizens. He had scarcely reached his quarters when the Marshal of Burgundy joined Charles's army with the forces he commanded. With him came Philip of Savoy and two of his brothers, Antony de Châteauneuf

and other men who had once shared largely in the king's favour, but who had fled from his resentment after betraying his confidence. Unpleasant recollections of the bridge of Montereau may have occurred to Lewis. These his enemies, who now called themselves the partisans of his brother, might consider the occasion favourable for a bold stroke. If they acted without the connivance of Charles he might be grateful to those who satisfied his enmity without irretrievably compromising his honour. He therefore asked to be allowed to move into the castle, where his archers could at any rate defend him against a surprise. On the next day the conferences began; all that he could demand was offered to Charles if only he would abandon the alliance of Brittany and England. But he was determined not to give way, and insensible to the blandishments of his guest, who may have been tormented by painful misgivings as he looked from his prison-like rooms at a gloomy tower in which Charles the Simple had been confined and, it was said, murdered by a rebellious vassal.

When a rupture with Burgundy appeared imminent, the king, or Dammartin with his sanction, had sent agents to Liège in the hopes of profiting by the misery and despair of the citizens. At the first suggestion of an interview with the king, Charles had objected that he could scarcely believe in his sincere desire for peace while his envoys were encouraging rebels. Balue replied that when the people of Liège learnt that the king and duke had met, they would not venture upon any hostile movement. But the French agents were not informed of their master's intended visit to Péronne, and did not attempt to discourage a premature outbreak. It is indeed doubtful whether they could in any case have changed the course of events.

The Pope, so long the enemy of the men of Liège, had been persuaded by the promises and influence of the French Court to take them under his protection. All interdicts and censures had been revoked while the Papal legate, an influential and humane Roman ecclesiastic, endeavoured to reconcile Lewis of Bourbon and his flock. The exiles were recalled and received into the city with the consent of the Chapter, who were not a little indignant at an attempt to levy the fine on ecclesiastical as well as lay property. The legate had arranged that the bishop should also return, and that the inhabitants should make due submission to their spiritual and temporal prince. It by no means suited Charles's policy that Liège should be reconciled to its bishop and assert its position as a free imperial city. At the last moment the worthless and dissolute prelate yielded to Burgundian influence. He left Maestricht, but instead of coming, as had been arranged, to Liège, he joined Humbercourt, the Burgundian governor, and his men-at-arms, at Tongres. The legate could not restrain the fury of the citizens. On October 8th, the day on which Lewis received the safe-conduct, they sallied forth to bring back the bishop by force. Tongres was surprised; Humbercourt, the bishop, and many of the Chapter who had joined him, captured. Humbercourt was treated with courtesy and allowed to escape. The leaders of the popular movement did not wish needlessly to provoke the vengeance of Burgundy. The bishop received every mark of respect from his captors. But the archdeacon and some of the most unpopular members of the Chapter were barbarously murdered by the mob. The first rumours of what had happened reached Péronne on the night of October 10th. As was natural, they were greatly exaggerated. Tongres had been sacked, the garrison put to the sword, Humbercourt and the bishop

murdered, the king's envoys had been seen leading and encouraging the assailants. Charles broke into cries of rage, "The traitor king! So he is only come to cheat me by a false pretence of peace! By St George, he and those villains of Liège shall pay dearly for this!" He did not pause to consider whether it was likely that Lewis had been simple enough to provoke a catastrophe fatal to his hopes and dangerous to his safety. If Commines, the duke's chamberlain, and another favourite attendant who were with their master at the time, had not done their best to soothe him, it is probable that the donjon of Péronne would once more have closed upon a captive king. Charles was at little pains to conceal his rage, and when Lewis was told that the gates of town and castle were guarded to prevent the escape of a thief who had stolen a casket of jewels, he knew that he was a prisoner.

Yet, however bitter his self-reproach, however gloomy his forebodings, he did not lose his presence of mind. His attendants were allowed free access to the castle, he had brought with him 15,000 gold crowns, and these he anxiously employed to secure the good offices of Charles's advisers. The man who distributed these gifts considered his master's position so precarious, that he thought he might with impunity divert half the sum to his own profit. It added to the king's perplexity that the Bourbons, the most powerful of the French nobles who accompanied him, were the brothers of the bishop, whose reported murder was the chief pretext of the politic fury of the duke.

For three nights the angry agitation and perplexity of Charles were so great that he did not undress. He would throw himself on his bed for a time and then start up and pace about his room, uttering threats and invectives against the king.

The King's Fate Decided.—Nothing was done or

decided on the first day (October 11th). On the second a council was held which sat late into the night. What had really happened at Tongres was now known, but Charles's indignation was not the less hot. His rage was indeed so excessive and extravagant as to appear almost inexplicable. "Was this," asks M. Michelet (vi. 273), "mere acting? Probably not: our passions have wonderful capabilities of self-deceit; they excite themselves when it is to our profit in perfect good faith. It was convenient for the duke to be surprised, and surprised he was; convenient to believe that he was betrayed, he believed accordingly. It was necessary for his fury to be blind and terrible to make him forget altogether the too plain provision of the safe-conduct 'notwithstanding any cause which may now be or hereafter may arise.' His fury was indeed terrible; it could not have been greater had the king murdered his wife, his mother, and his child." A minority of the council, the enemies of Lewis, or those who were only anxious to flatter the passions of their master, advised him to use to the full the opportunity which chance and the foolhardiness and duplicity of his adversary had placed in his hands. They urged him to keep the king in secure confinement after providing for the virtual partition of the kingdom among the great feudatories. The majority, those who had some regard for the honour of the house of Burgundy, the lawyers, who respected the letter, if not the spirit, of an agreement, perhaps also the more far-sighted politicians, were of a different opinion. The fame of the duke would suffer irreparable injury by so flagrant a violation of his plighted word. The advantages, moreover, to be gained by the captivity, the deposition, perhaps the death of the king, were uncertain. The heir to the throne was entirely in the hands of the Bretons, and was not likely to be eager to advance the interests of Burgundy.

A large and well disciplined army, commanded by experienced captains, was assembled on the frontiers. If they could not rescue their master, they would at least endeavour to avenge him, while the new king could acquire an easy popularity by execrating a crime, of which he and Francis of Brittany would reap all the advantage. It was a wiser course to accept the terms which the king in his alarm proffered,—the settlement in favour of Burgundy of all the disputed questions which had arisen out of the treaties of Arras and Conflans,—and it might be possible to humiliate and disgrace Lewis by compelling him to take part in the punishment of his allies, the citizens of Liège, who by their trust in him had been lured to destruction. Charles left the council apparently undecided, and passed the night in as great a storm of passion as the two preceding. The conflict within him doubtless fanned his wrath. Commines, who shared his room, endeavoured to calm him, and to persuade him to embrace the course most consistent with his interests and the king's safety. For so great a prince, if once a captive, may scarcely hope to leave his prison alive. Towards morning Charles determined to content himself with insisting that Lewis should sign a peace on such terms as he should dictate, and accompany him against Liège. The king, says Commines, had a friend who informed him that he would be safe if he agreed to these conditions, but that otherwise his peril would be extreme. This friend was Commines himself, and Lewis never forgot so timely a service. The two days during which his fate was being decided, had been passed by him in the greatest agony of mind. Though he had been allowed to communicate freely with the French nobles and his own attendants, he had been ominously neglected by the Burgundian courtiers. As soon as the duke had determined what conditions he intended to impose, he

hastened to the castle to visit his captive. The memorable interview is described by two eye-witnesses (Commines and Olivier de la Marche). Charles entered the king's presence with a lowly obeisance; but his gestures and his unsteady voice betrayed his suppressed passion. The king could not conceal his fear. "My brother," he asked, "am I not safe in your dominions?" "Yes, Sire, so safe that if I saw a cross bow pointed at you I would throw myself before you to shield you from the bolt." He then asked the king to swear a peace on the proposed basis:—(1.) The faithful execution of the treaty of Conflans; (2.) The abolition of the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris over Flanders; (3.) The surrender of all regalian rights in Picardy; (4.) The release of the duke from all fealty to the king if the treaty was in any way infringed or imperfectly executed. Lewis agreed, and Charles requested his assistance in punishing the rebellion of Liège. The king expressed his perfect readiness. The princes then signed a draft of the treaty and swore to execute it faithfully on the cross of St. Laud. Charles had insisted that Lewis should swear on that relic, a fragment of the true cross once kept in the church of St. Laud at Angers, which the king always carried with him, esteeming it highly, because he believed that whoever forswore himself on it would surely die within the year. The duke at the same time promised to do homage for the fiefs he held of the crown of France, but the execution of this promise was evaded. On the 15th, the duke with an army of 40,000 men, and the king with his slender escort, and some 300 men-at-arms who joined him by the way, began their march on Liège. Lewis was not less anxious than his companion that Dammartin should not attempt a forcible rescue. Victory or defeat would have been alike dangerous to his safety. Twice at Charles's request orders were sent to Dammartin

to disband, or at least to remove the French army from the frontier. The king's letters were delivered by his messenger in the persistent presence of a Burgundian who prevented the possibility of any private communication. The crafty old soldier paid little attention to such orders. He sent word to the duke that unless his master soon returned, all France would come to fetch him.

The Capture and Sack of Liège.—The first divisions of the Burgundian army reached Liège on the 22d of October. The citizens, whose walls had been destroyed and artillery confiscated, were in no position to resist an army "which might have conquered an emperor." At the suggestion of the legate they released their bishop, begging him to intercede on their behalf, and offered to surrender their goods to the duke's discretion if only he would spare their lives. Charles would not listen to their overtures; he swore that he would have town and inhabitants at his discretion, or that he and all his army should perish in the attempt.

The bishop had sworn to live or die with his people; he was not allowed, probably he did not seriously attempt, to leave the Burgundian camp. The legate himself, having in vain endeavoured to obtain terms, or at least some promise of mercy, fled from the doomed city. He was captured by the ducal troops and roughly treated, not without the connivance of Charles, who, when the matter was brought officially before him, was compelled to order his release and to treat him with due respect. The townsmen, with the boldness of despair, sallied forth to meet the advanced guard of their enemies; they were driven back with great loss. Four days later (the 26th) the duke and the main body of the army had not come up. The troops who had repulsed the sally on the 22d had as yet met with little resistance, and thought themselves strong

enough to occupy an open town defended only by ill-armed traders and mechanics. The weather was cold and rainy; the temptation of securing comfortable quarters and the undivided profits of the sack irresistible. The assailants occupied one of the suburbs, but their advance was checked by some hastily-constructed defences. At nightfall the citizens sallied through the breaches of their wall. They were enabled, by their knowledge of the rough and precipitous ground, to fall unobserved upon the rear of the enemy. 800 Burgundians were killed, and the rout would have been complete, had not the duke with the main body of his army pushed forward to the assistance of a division which was still holding its ground. On the next day the king arrived, and soon after took up his quarters close to those of the duke. He showed himself to the men, who had placed their trust in him, wearing the St. Andrew's cross, the badge of Burgundy, and replying "Vive Bourgoyne!" to their cries of "Vive France!" That night there was a great and sudden alarm. The Duke of Burgundy, though brave, was sometimes wanting in presence of mind, and on this occasion appeared more troubled in the king's presence than pleased his friends. Lewis took the command, giving his orders with great coolness and prudence.[1] Even as a general he gained by comparison with his rival. He was indeed not less anxious than Charles that the Burgundian army should suffer no reverse. He feared everything that might arouse the ready suspicions and ungovernable temper of the duke. On the evening of the 29th a few hundred men,[2] colliers and miners from the mountainous district

[1] Commines, II. ch. xi. Et à ouyr sa parolle et à veoir sa contenance, sembloit bien roy de grand vertu et de grant sens, et qui aultresfois se fust trouvé en telz affaires.

[2] The numbers are variously given, 300, 400, or 600.

of Franchemont, led by the owners of the houses in which the king and duke were sleeping, made a desperate attempt to surprise the princes in their beds. They would have succeeded had they not delayed to attack a barn in which 300 Burgundian men-at-arms were posted. Only a few followed their guides straight to the quarters of the sovereigns. They were unable, therefore, to overcome the resistance of the guard before the noise of the conflict had aroused the camp. The assailants were overwhelmed by numbers, and fell fighting to the last. The assault had been ordered for the next day, but this bold and unexpected attack so surprised and disconcerted the Burgundians, that the king thought he might be able to persuade the duke to agree to a capitulation, or at least to postpone the assault. He only obtained a contemptuous request that he should consult his own safety by retiring to Namur. This reflection on his courage stimulated him to greater ostentation of zeal. He could scarcely be restrained from leading the assault. The citizens were worn out by guarding an open town against a powerful army for more than a week; they imagined that as it was a Sunday, they would not be attacked till the morrow. The assailants entered the town with little or no resistance. Yet the fury and licence of the soldiery could not have been greater had their passions been excited by an obstinate and bloody struggle. The horrors of the sack of Dinant were surpassed, although many of the citizens were able to escape across the Meuse. The deliberate vengeance of the duke was more searching and not less cruel than the lust and rapine of his army: all prisoners who would not pay a heavy ransom were drowned. Although the cold was so intense that wine froze, and that his men lost fingers and toes from frost-bites, Charles did not shrink from the labour of hunting down those

who had fled to the mountains, and burning the villages in which they had sought a refuge. He had previously taken leave of the king. Four or five days after the occupation of Liège, Lewis had expressed a wish to depart. If he could be of any further use, his brother might command his services; but he was anxious to see that their treaty was registered by the Parliament of Paris, without which it could not be valid. The duke seemed unwilling to let his prey escape, but could find no pretence for his detention. Next year, said the king, he would come again and spend a month pleasantly with his dear brother in festivities and good cheer. The treaty, now drawn up in its final shape by the Burgundian lawyers, was read over to Lewis, in order that he might object to any article of which he disapproved. But he readily ratified all that he had promised at Péronne. It had seemed useless to require him to bestow Normandy on Charles of France; nor is the question of his appanage mentioned in the treaty itself. But the king was compelled to promise to invest his brother with Champagne and Brie. These provinces, lying between Burgundy and the Low Countries, would, in the hands of an ally, serve to consolidate the duke's dominions, and could be easily defended in case the king attempted to resume his concessions. Just before the princes parted Lewis said, as if the thought had suddenly occurred, "What do you wish me to do if my brother is not content with the appanage I offer him for your sake?" Charles answered carelessly, "If he will not take it, I leave the matter to you two to settle; only let him be satisfied." The king considered the thoughtless admission into which he had tricked his rival most important, since he fancied that it released him, so far as his brother's appanage was concerned, from the fearful obligation of his oath.

The King's Return.—But notwithstanding this last advantage, we cannot doubt that Lewis felt bitterly disappointed and ashamed. Although all songs, caricatures, and writings reflecting on the perfidy of the Duke of Burgundy, and by implication on the folly of the king, were forbidden under severe penalties, and even all manner of talking birds which might be taught the hateful word Péronne been seized by the royal officers, he had not the heart to visit Paris. The Parliament was summoned to meet him at Senlis. He ordered it to register the treaty without comment, and hastened southward to hide his mortification in his favourite castles of Touraine.

Yet the Duke of Burgundy had not much cause for exultation. The king, says Commines, would have agreed to concessions almost equally great had the treaty been signed at Paris. Nor was there any real security except the king's superstitious regard for the oath he had sworn that the terms extorted would be executed. The king had been compelled to send letters patent releasing the great vassals from their fealty in case he infringed his engagements. But as the princes were at all times ready to attack him when they could do so with impunity and profit, it mattered little whether they were or were not formally authorised to do so. To secure the humiliation of his rival, Charles had trampled under foot the boasted honour of the house of Burgundy. The clause in his letter which guaranteed the king's safety and freedom, "notwithstanding whatever might occur," was too explicit. He thought to ruin the king's reputation by compelling him to assist in the destruction of Liège. In this he was disappointed, partly because the political morality of the age was so dead that it was offended by no crime or treachery, partly because Lewis was too obviously not a free agent. He might, it is true, have shown less zeal

and alacrity in executing his odious penance, but he could not have acted otherwise without endangering his safety. He might perhaps have thrown himself with his 400 men-at-arms into Liège, and have ordered Dammartin to hurry to his assistance. This course would have been heroic, and might have been successful, but the 15th century did not expect such heroism in its rulers, nor was Lewis the man to venture so bold and hazardous a stroke.

There is little doubt that Lewis meant honestly to observe the terms imposed upon him at Péronne. Not that he was more scrupulous than his contemporaries, who never hesitated to break engagements, however solemn, which it was no longer their interest to observe. Indeed, at all times a treaty imposed upon a weaker enemy is little more than a promise to obey the will of the stronger till there is some hope of again defying him with impunity. Nor would the king have found it difficult to excuse himself, had he repudiated the conditions to which he had been compelled to submit, as soon as he had escaped from the hands of his enemy. Promises extorted from a captive in peril of liberty and life have been commonly held to be invalid, and the yet broader doctrine that against a traitor treachery might justly be employed had been sanctioned by the greatest authority of the mediæval church.[3] But Lewis had sworn by the cross of St. Laud: he feared the miraculous penalty of perjury, and the materialistic superstition which enslaved his acute and cynical intellect recognised none but a formal morality. Nor was the temptation to insult the sanctity of the relic and to incur a risk so fearful overwhelming. Not much was to be gained by immediate action. In England the influence of Warwick appeared for the moment to be

[3] St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Which of the plots and subterfuges of Lewis XI. could this saint then have condemned?

gone. The Dukes of Brittany and Berri were hostile. The Armagnacs were intriguing in the south. When Charles of France was settled in his appanage, and when Warwick had driven the queen's family, the allies of Burgundy, from power, the time would be ripe for punishing the perfidy and checking the pretensions of Charles. Nor could it be doubted that by then he would himself either have failed to perform his part of the treaty, or have been provoked by the king's negotiations with his brother and with the English, into some act which would relieve Lewis from the responsibility of being the first to violate his oath.

The King Invests his Brother with Guienne.—The king's most immediate object was therefore to induce his brother freely to accept some other appanage than Champagne and Brie. The alternative he proposed was tempting—the Duchy of Guienne, as far as the Charente, with La Rochelle and other additions. Charles of France hesitated; some of his advisers represented to him that if, despite the warnings of the Duke of Burgundy, who entreated him to persist in demanding Champagne, he accepted the king's offers, the duke might be provoked to refuse him his support in case he should be driven from Guienne as before from Normandy. But Lewis had bought the services of Odet D'Aydie, Lord of Lescun, a favourite of Francis of Brittany, by whose advice the Duke of Berri was generally guided. Lescun was on all accounts eager that the Duke Charles should close with the king's proposals. He was a Gascon himself, and anxious for power in his native province; nor did he wish his master to separate himself from Brittany and to fall under the control of the Duke of Burgundy, whose influence would, he feared, leave little room for his own, and whose alliance with the English he detested. But

his arguments were balanced by those of the Bishop of Verdun, the duke's almoner, who was in the king's pay, but who now betrayed him, following in this the example and advice of Cardinal Balue. The king's partiality for Balue, a base and apparently commonplace intriguer, has been justly punished by their close connection in the popular conception of history. The political importance of Balue does not seem to have been great. He for the most part contented himself with flattering the opinions and encouraging the prejudices of his master. His ill-advised and eager advocacy of the visit to Péronne led Lewis to regard him with less favour. He therefore began to intrigue with the king's enemies, and to advise Charles of France to cling to the Burgundian alliance. A secret correspondence between the Duke of Berri, Balue, the Bishop of Verdun, and Charles of Burgundy, was discovered. The two prelates were at once arrested. The immense and ill-acquired property of Balue was confiscated; a portion was employed to reward the good services of Odet D'Aydie, and to stimulate him to further exertions. The Pope was requested to send apostolic vicars to France to act as assessors at the trial of the cardinal and bishop. But Paul II. and the Sacred College protested against the arrest of a prince of the Church, and no satisfactory arrangements to try the traitors could be made. Since Lewis dared not order them to be put to death, he determined that at any rate their life should not be pleasant. They were shut up in iron cages eight feet square. Balue himself had recommended these inventions of Italian tyranny to the king as a convenient and safe way of confining prisoners.

Charles yielded at length to the representations of Lescun, and accepted the splendid appanage offered by his brother; yet so weak and vacillating were his resolutions

that he was with difficulty prevented from listening at the last moment to the suggestions of others among his courtiers who were in the pay of Burgundy or jealous of the reigning favourite; he had even obtained a safe-conduct from Edward IV., intending to take refuge in England in case he should not be able to reach the Low Countries. On the 10th of August the new Duke of Guienne reached La Rochelle, and swore on the cross of St. Laud never to be party to the captivity or death of his brother, but to defend him to the utmost of his power; not to aspire to the government of the kingdom, and not to be a suitor for the hand of the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy without the express permission of Lewis.

Reconciliation of Lewis and his Brother.—In order that the reconciliation might be complete, the king invited his brother to meet him on a bridge over the Sèvre, where that river formed the boundary of the new duchy of Guienne. A barrier was constructed on the most approved plan, with a small and securely barred window, through which the princes could converse. Charles, with many expressions of regret for his former conduct, asked his brother's pardon; the king assured him that it was already granted, and affectionately besought him to forget the past. The young duke insisted upon passing the barriers, and the brothers embraced so heartily and repeatedly, that all their courtiers were affected to tears, while both shores rang with the acclamations of the multitude, who saw in their reconciliation a happy omen for the future peace of the monarchy. Even the tide, if we may believe the evidence of Lewis himself and of other witnesses, rose four feet less than usual; it would otherwise have wetted the feet of the princes, or have hastened their parting. They afterwards spent several

days together with every sign of confidence and affection. There is no reason to question the sincerity of the assurances of good will lavished by the king on his brother. A good understanding between him and the heir to the throne was a fatal blow to the machinations of his enemies. Unfortunately, to rest in any way on the feeble and aimless intentions of the Duke of Guienne was to lean on a slight and treacherous support. Yet for a time all went well. Lewis endeavoured to reward his brother for abandoning the hope of marrying Mary of Burgundy, by procuring for him the hand of the sister or daughter of Henry IV., the rival heiresses of Castile. After the marriage of the Princess Isabella to Ferdinand of Aragon, Henry IV. attempted once more to secure the succession of his daughter Jane (La Bertrandeja), and gladly promised her hand to the Duke of Guienne, in the hopes of thus obtaining the support of France. The only result of this negotiation was to irritate still further the house of Aragon, and to alienate from France the faction dominant in Castile. Charles showed his gratitude for the king's care of his interests by receiving coldly an embassy sent by the Duke of Burgundy to inquire whether he was content with his appanage, to offer him the collar of the Golden Fleece, and to suggest the possibility of a match with the Lady Mary. The duke's disappointment and anger at the reconciliation of the brothers was greatly increased by the answer of the Duke of Guienne to these overtures. He thanked his cousin for his solicitude. The king had treated him with such generous kindness that he was anxious to do nothing which might be displeasing to him, he could not therefore listen to the proposals of the Duke of Burgundy, nor could he accept the order of the Golden Fleece, since the king had named him first among the knights of the newly instituted order of St.

Michael, the statutes of which did not allow him to accept any other.[4]

The Duke of Guienne was rewarded for the discretion of his reply by the grant of the county of Bigorre, and of other lordships which had belonged to the Count of

[4] The orders of knighthood were a useful political instrument. The members were bound by various obligations more or less strict to the sovereign of the order. Edward III. had found in the Order of the Garter the means of imposing an obligation of personal loyalty on men not born his subjects. The Order of the Golden Fleece had been even more useful to the house of Burgundy. "The Chapter of the Golden Fleece," says M. Michelet, v. 405, "was a tribunal where the proudest nobles submitted to the judgment of the duke; where he could honour or disgrace them by a sentence of his order. Thus he caused the Lord of Neufchâtel to be expelled, and excluded from the order as unworthy the Prince of Orange and the King of Denmark. The Duke of Alençon, on the other hand, though found guilty by the Parliament, was honourably acquitted by the Chapter of the Golden Fleece. The nobles who were degraded by the sentence of the lawyers of Paris were readily consoled when they found themselves glorified by the award of a chivalrous court in which even kings sat." The Order of the Star founded by King John failed to rival the splendour of the Garter or of the Golden Fleece. It never recovered the fatal day of Poitiers, when most of the knights were either killed or taken prisoners. One of the statutes of the order provided that the knights should never leave the field of battle unless victorious or captive, an absurd and suicidal engagement which the king set the example of observing. The number, moreover, of the knights (500) was too great for the honour to be sufficiently valued and distinctive. Although Lewis XI. had little sympathy with the theatrical chivalry of the time, he saw the advantage of an institution which served in any degree to stimulate the very weak loyalty of his nobles and captains. The statutes of the new order were framed in accordance with this object. Even those among the knights who were not his subjects were forbidden to make war upon him unless twice summoned by their sovereigns, and then only under their immediate command. There were thirty-six knights. The king named the first twelve; after that, vacancies were to be filled up by election, the king having a double vote. The prohibition to accept another order was not peculiar to the statutes of St. Michael; it is also found in those of the Golden Fleece. Yet Charles habitually wore the order of the Garter. Francis of Brittany refused to accept the order of St. Michael, on the ground that the obligations he would incur as a member of the order would interfere with his independence as a sovereign prince. Lewis XI. was the more offended by his refusal because he accepted the Golden Fleece shortly after.

Armagnac. That inveterate traitor and his cousin the Duke of Nemours had again rebelled against the royal authority. They collected large bodies of mercenaries, who ravaged the surrounding districts, and they had set at naught the writs and judgments of the Parliament of Toulouse, and invited the King of England to invade Guienne. When, however, they heard that Dammartin was marching against them at the head of a numerous and well-disciplined army, they attempted no resistance. The Count of Armagnac fled into Spain, and his estates were confiscated; the Duke of Nemours sued for mercy, and was once more pardoned, on condition that if he again began his treasonable practices he should be liable to be punished for his old as well as for his new offences.

Submission of Ghent.—After dictating terms to the King of France at Péronne, and crushing the obstinate hostility of Liège, Charles of Burgundy had received at Brussels the trembling deputies of Ghent, who attended his Court to surrender the banners of their guilds, and to receive the final sentence of the duke. The "great privilege" of Ghent, the earliest charter of the town, granted by Philip the Fair in 1301, was solemnly annulled by Charles, and destroyed by his chancellor in the sight of an assembly, among which were "embassies from France, England, Hungary, Bohemia, Naples, Sicily, Cyprus, Norway, Poland, Denmark, Russia, Livonia, Prussia, Austria, Milan, and other states." This may be an exaggeration, and it is probable that in some cases a few traders may have been dignified by the solemn designation of ambassadors. Yet the Court of Burgundy had become the centre of European politics, and Charles himself believed that the time was come for the realisation of the splendid and extensive but vague and not always consistent schemes of ambition which he had formed. He

had, he believed, firmly secured the alliance of England, and at the same time humiliated and disarmed his most dangerous enemy. He began to negotiate with George Podiebrad of Bohemia, in the hope of being elected king of the Romans, with the Emperor Frederic to obtain the title of king, and at the same time bought, subject to a right of redemption, the Alsatian dominions of Duke Sigismund of Austria.[5]

He was disappointed and indignant when he found that by his reconciliation with his brother Lewis had succeeded in regaining more than he had lost by his foolish confidence at Pèronne; while it seemed that England would either be governed by a man whom the Duke of Burgundy justly regarded as an enemy, or would be involved in a civil war which would prevent her participation in the attack he meditated upon France.

The Earl of Warwick takes refuge in France.—Warwick, though he had apparently acquiesced in the elevation of the Wydevilles and the marriage of the king's sister to Charles of Burgundy, had only been awaiting the opportunity of more complete revenge. He married his eldest daughter to the Duke of Clarence, in defiance of Edward's prohibition. A rebellion broke out; Clarence and Warwick placed themselves at its head. The king

[5] Sigismund, who ruled over the dominions of his house in the Tyrol and on the upper Rhine, was mild and peaceable in disposition, but had been involved in a quarrel with the Swiss by his Alsatian vassals. The victorious Swiss had ravaged the duke's territory until he sued for peace, and promised to pay 10,000 florins. This Sigismund was unable to do without pawning part of his dominions, and the Alsatians wished to be ruled by some one who would chastise the presumption of the League. As the Duke of Burgundy was rich and ambitious, and the prospect of a war was likely to be rather attractive to him than not, Sigismund's advisers recommended their master to apply to him. This he did, after first making the offer to the King of France, who was too wise to accept it, and glad that there should be a chance of his rival becoming involved in German affairs, and in an unprofitable and dangerous war with the Swiss.

was taken prisoner, the father and one of the brothers of the queen were put to death. The terms upon which Edward was released secured the inheritance of the crown to the house of Neville. The son of the Lord Montagu was betrothed to the daughter of the king, who had as yet no son. It is probable that the personal popularity of Edward, and the danger of dividing the adherents of the White Rose at a time when the Lancastrians were preparing for a last effort, led Warwick to abandon the project he had apparently formed of transferring the crown to Clarence. A Burgundian historian attributes the release of Edward IV. to the intervention of his brother-in-law, who, in a letter to the lord mayor and citizens of London, reminded them that they had promised, when he married the Lady Margaret, to be good and loyal subjects to her brother, and threatened them, if they now abandoned Edward IV., with the most serious consequences of his displeasure. No doubt this threat had considerable weight. The still increasing commerce between London and the Netherlands caused the merchants of both countries to shrink anxiously from a rupture.

The hollowness of the reconciliation between the great earl and the king must have been obvious; the obstinate hostility of the Duke of Burgundy was the real cause of the general assembly of the French forces ordered by Lewis in the beginning of 1470, although the fear of an English invasion furnished a more convenient pretext. "The day the king's proclamation was published, came news to Paris that the Duke Charles had been seen in the city of Ghent wearing on one of his legs the garter, and on his breast the red cross, the order and badge of King Edward of England, thus declaring himself the mortal enemy of the king and realm of France."

Meantime another rising had been prepared by Warwick. The insurgents had been defeated by the king, and the earl, accompanied by the Duke of Clarence, embarked with many of his adherents on a fleet of 80 ships, intending to establish himself in Calais, of which town he was governor. His lieutenant, Sir John Wenlock, fired upon his fleet, and compelled him to seek a refuge in the harbours at the mouth of the Seine, where he was hospitably welcomed by his ally Lewis XI. While sailing down the Channel, the English refugees were attacked by the navy of the Duke of Burgundy, and revenged themselves by the capture of sixteen Flemish and Dutch ships, which were publicly sold at Rouen. Charles complained, with his usual intemperance and violence, of the asylum afforded his enemies in the French ports, and of the sale in the king's dominions of vessels piratically taken from his subjects. He ordered all the property of French traders in the Low Countries to be seized, and refused to listen to the representations of Lewis, who offered full indemnity and reparation, and protested that he received and assisted Lord Warwick as the enemy of the King of England, his hereditary and natural antagonist, and not as the enemy of the Duke of Burgundy.

Difficult Position of the King.—The birth of a dauphin (June 1470) deprived the Duke of Guienne of the position of heir-apparent, and would probably dispose him to listen to the suggestions of his brother's enemies. For this and for other reasons, Lewis was anxious to give Charles no pretext for hostilities. "Monsieur du Plessis," he wrote to his secretary, "you know the desire that I have for Warwick's return to England, as well because I wish to see him get the better of his enemies, or that at least through him the realm of Eng-

land may be embroiled, as to avoid the questions that have arisen out of his residence here. For you know that these Bretons and Burgundians have no other aim than to make it a pretext for breaking the peace and reopening the war, which I would not see commenced on such a ground of quarrel. Wherefore, I pray you, take pains to urge Monsieur de Warwick by all the arguments in your power to hasten his departure." An embassy was sent at the same time to offer further explanations to the duke at St. Omer. They were received by that prince in the midst of an imposing assembly of knights of the Golden Fleece, nobles, and prelates. Charles himself sat under a dais of cloth of gold, high on a throne more lofty than those of kings and emperors. He scarce deigned to acknowledge by a nod the lowly obeisance of the ambassadors, and addressed them in a tone of vehement and arrogant reproach. No sufficient reparation could, he declared, be offered for what had been done. The principal envoy replied with spirit, "My Lord, the king offers to you peace, amity, and reparation; if you will not listen to reason, and mischief ensue, it will not be his fault. There is a God above you both." The duke did not attempt to control his anger. Dismissing the ambassadors, he exclaimed, in the impotence of his passion, "We Portuguese, when our friends make friends with our enemies, bid them go to the hundred thousand devils of hell." "This answer," says Chastellain, "displeased even the courtiers of the duke, inasmuch as it was bad taste implicitly to tell a king of France to go to the hundred thousand devils of hell. It seemed . . . that the duke did great dishonour to himself by these words, especially as he was a subject of the king, and honoured by bearing the flowers de luce as his arms. And his own people murmured that he should call him-

self a Portuguese, since covertly scorning the name of Frenchman, and not daring to call himself an Englishman, he thus designated himself after his mother, who had been the friend of England and the enemy of France." The close alliance with England, however agreeable to the trading and manufacturing communities of the Low Countries, was not popular among the Walloon and Burgundian nobles, who were French in their sympathies, though hostile to the centralised monarchy and revolutionary government of Lewis XI.

Lewis Reconciles Queen Margaret and Warwick.—We are not told whether Warwick himself first conceived the possibility of a reconciliation with the Lancastrians, or whether it was suggested to him by the King of France. But an alliance between the proud and revengeful Margaret and the man who had deposed, imprisoned, and insulted her husband, outraged her good name, exiled and murdered her friends, must have appeared impossible to a mind less confident in the resources of its ingenuity, less accustomed to disregard all but political considerations than that of Lewis. That this alliance should be sealed by the marriage of the children of the queen and her enemy was monstrous and unnatural. The king might justly pride himself on the dexterity and artful persuasion which united those who were separated by such depths of infamy and bloodshed; but only the prayers of King René, who was fetched from the pleasant retreat of his old age in Provence, could move his daughter to submit to the shame and degradation of allowing the blood of Lancaster to mix with that of the Nevilles. Yet the position of the great earl did not cease to be ambiguous. His eldest daughter was the wife of the Duke of Clarence, her younger sister was betrothed to the son of Henry VI

He appeared to be prepared to keep a pretender in reserve whichever dynasty prevailed. Lewis, who can scarcely have hoped to be actively assisted by England, must have rejoiced in the abundant material of future strife.

The harbours of Normandy were watched by the navies of Holland and Zealand, and Charles did not cease to point out the preparations of his enemies to his brother-in-law. We cannot attribute to a prince so able as Edward the folly and blindness which led James II. to slight the warnings of Lewis XIV., yet it is difficult to account for his extreme and baseless confidence. A violent wind scattered the blockading squadron; Warwick and his confederates, well supplied with French gold, threw themselves on the coast of Devonshire. So universally was Edward deserted, that in less than a fortnight he was compelled to embark with a few hundred followers on some Flemish ships in the harbour of Lynn, and to seek a refuge in the dominions of the Duke of Burgundy.

Charles was in every way annoyed at the course of events. The presence of his brother-in-law in the Netherlands was an additional embarrassment. He would have been better pleased had Edward lost both kingdom and life. Even when allying himself by marriage with the house of York, he had not forgotten that he was a descendant of John of Gaunt, and had kept about his Court the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, and other Lancastrian leaders. He now hoped that their influence, and the strong popular feeling in England against joining France in a war against the Low Countries, would be powerful enough to outweigh the enmity of Warwick, and to ensure at least the neutrality of England. "I declare," he wrote in a letter to the English merchants of Calais, "that as regards the dissensions of the royal

house of England, in which I have always in all my treaties guarded against becoming involved, I have never aimed at aught but the defence of my dominions and subjects; for nothing is unjust in self-defence. . . . If you will not have my friendship, I swear by St. George, who knows that I am a better Englishman, and desire the weal of your realm more than yourselves, . . . that all shall learn whether I be sprung from the glorious blood of Lancaster or not, . . . yet this I would rather prove in the way of friendship than of hate."

Schemes of the Constable St. Pol.—While the Duke of Burgundy hastened to recognise Henry VI. and to guard against provoking the enmity of England, Lewis XI. was showing his joy at the success of his allies by thanksgivings and pilgrimages, and by sumptuously entertaining Queen Margaret with the young Prince of Wales and his bride. Secure of the assistance, or at least of the neutrality, of England, the king hoped that the hour had come to punish the perfidy and insolence of his rival. All his captains urged him to commence hostilities. Especially the Count of St. Pol, who boasted that he could at any moment occupy St. Quentin, and that even in Flanders and in Brabant he would determine several towns to rebel against the duke. The constable was tired of his dangerous position "between hammer and anvil," and hoped to escape from the necessity of trimming between France and Burgundy by using as his instrument the Duke of Guienne, whose lasting gratitude he imagined he could secure by obtaining for him the hand of Mary of Burgundy. He was aware of her father's determination to share his power with no son-in-law, and of the insincerity of the negotiations for her marriage carried on simultaneously with the Duke of Guienne, the Marquis of Pont, the Duke of Savoy, and Maximilian of Austria.

But he hoped that if the king's attack on Burgundy was supported by the princes, Charles might be reduced to such straits as gladly to purchase the assistance of the Dukes of Guienne and Brittany by marrying his daughter to the former. Lescun, the favourite of Charles of France and of the Duke Francis, notwithstanding his oaths of fidelity to the king, entered into the scheme, and secured the co-operation of the princes he governed. This plot appears to have escaped the far-sighted and jealous suspicion of Lewis. When we consider the perpetual and shameless faithlessness by which he was surrounded, we can scarcely call the caution excessive which led him to shrink with such timidity from any line of action the success of which depended upon the fidelity of his captains or agents.

Yet he neglected no measures which might strengthen his position. A defensive league [6] was concluded with the Swiss Cantons, who were so irritated and alarmed by the acquisition of Alsatia by Charles that they renounced his alliance. Lewis exerted himself also to secure the good will of his subjects by wise provisions in favour of trade, and by enlarging the municipal privileges of the towns. Two things only were refused to his people, reduction of taxation, which it was impossible for him to grant, but without which all other concessions failed to excite the gratitude of the nation, and political liberty, which seems indeed scarcely to have been valued by those who ought to have been its champions, yet which alone might have saved the French monarchy from those tendencies which were destined to bear such evil fruit.[7]

[6] The contracting parties explicitly promised in no way to assist or countenance the aggressions of Charles of Burgundy.

[7] An ordinance of March 1470 orders the governor and other magistrates of Dauphiny to assemble the Estates of that province in order that

Lewis prepares to attack Burgundy, 1470.—Before he began the war Lewis wished to make some public appeal to the country and to the princes who had guaranteed the treaty of Péronne. But instead of assembling the States General, whose traditions of independence he suspected, the king summoned a meeting of some sixty notables at Tours, inviting, says Commines, by name men whom he thought unlikely to contradict his will.

The chancellor explained to them how Charles had treacherously extorted iniquitous terms from his sovereign; how the latter, although he might reasonably have refused to recognise as valid concessions imposed by fraud and violence, had endeavoured faithfully to fulfil them, while Charles had violated the oaths he had voluntarily sworn on the wood of the true cross. He had not done homage nor taken the oaths of allegiance; he had not, as had been stipulated, sent to the king the deeds of his vassals guaranteeing the execution of the treaty; he had suborned the king's ministers; he had endeavoured to prevent the reconciliation of the king and his brother; he had proposed to the Duke of Brittany to surrender Guienne to the English; he had accepted the order of the Garter, and had boasted that he was English at heart; he had seized and confiscated the property of all French subjects in his dominions; and he had allowed his subjects to seize French vessels, and to make piratical descents on the coast of Normandy.

The notables replied unanimously and severally that the king and his subjects were fully released by the

they may vote the ordinary and extraordinary supplies. If the Estates refuse, the taxes are none the less to be levied, and those who refuse to pay are to be punished as they would be if they declined after a vote of the Estates.

perfidy and treason of the Duke of Burgundy from all obligations towards him. All the fiefs which he held of the crown of France ought to be sequestrated, and they one and all offered themselves, their lives, and their property to assist Lewis to inflict that chastisement on his rebellious subject which could not without dishonour be deferred. It was determined that the duke should be summoned to appear before the Parliament of Paris, and an officer of that court was found bold enough to serve the writ upon him in his town of Ghent. Charles was not a little surprised at such audacity. He had been warned of his danger by the Duke of Bourbon, who was jealous of the influence of Dammartin and of the power which he had obtained in the south. But Charles, after standing on his guard for a month or two, had disbanded his forces and had left Picardy for the north, were he was intriguing to obtain possession of the duchy of Guelders. He now hastened back to Hesdin, regretting that, unlike his rival, he had no companies of ordinance, no standing army always ready to beat back an attack, or at least to hold an enemy in check till the feudal levies of his scattered dominions could be assembled. Alarming news reached him from every side; he appeared no longer to have an ally. Even the Duke of Brittany had sent a small contingent to the royal army by the advice of Lescun, St. Pol's confederate in the scheme for extorting the consent of Charles to his daughter's marriage with the Duke of Guienne. Even his servants began to desert the court of a master whose severity and arrogance they hated, and whose star was no longer as they conceived in the ascendant. The son of the Prince of Orange, perhaps the greatest noble of Burgundy, the son of Raulin, the celebrated chancellor of Duke John, the Lords of Renti and Arçon, and the bastard Baldwin, the duke's half-

brother, fled to the Court of France where they received honourable welcome and entertainment. Charles accused the bastard and his friends of having plotted against his life, at the instigation of the king: they indignantly gave him the lie, and in turn imputed the foulest crimes to their former master. The charges shamelessly bandied to and fro were probably alike false, but are characteristic of the personal and political morality of the age. The duke was also accused of suborning a man to propose his assassination to the king, in order that had Lewis fallen into the trap, he might have been exposed to public shame and execration. The evidence against Charles is strong, nor is it improbable that his pride may have condescended to such an expedient.

The War begun.—Meantime the constable had begun the war in Picardy, and had occupied St. Quentin. Roie had surrendered to Dammartin, who was threatening Abbeville and Amiens. He received an angry and insulting letter from Charles, who at the same time summoned St. Pol to serve him as his vassal. The constable replied haughtily and in the tone of an equal; Dammartin reproached the duke with his treason and treachery.[8]

[8] Dammartin's letter is given in full, Lenglet, ii. 239, "Right high and mighty prince,—I have seen the letters which you have written to me. They have, I think, been composed by your council, and by your learned clerks; men better able to write than I who never lived by pen-craft. But to my answer. I know right well what grudge you bear me, because that which I have done and shall do all my life in your despite, is only for the honour and profit of the king and his realm. Right high and mighty prince, as touching the matter of Conflans, and that undertaking for the public weal—which ought to be called the public ill—in which I took part, and from which, as you will have it, I obtained not less honour than substance, advancement, and dignity. You know well that when the king succeeded to the crown it was not by my choice that I did not enter his service . . . but owing to the fear and ill will of my enemies; . . . and I would that you should know that had I been with the king when you began that public mischief which you call public weal, you would not have

Charles did not venture to throw himself into Amiens. If he had done so he might have saved the town. Perhaps he was deceived by the loyal professions of the citizens, who ostentatiously sent to him the letters of Dammartin with their seals unbroken. But as soon as the French general appeared the gates were thrown open. The defection of Abbeville was prevented by the activity of Philip de Crèvecœur, who flung himself into the town with 3,000 men-at-arms; while the duke began to collect a powerful army at Arras. The letters of the king express a fever of impatience and anxiety; he urges Dammartin to activity—"If ever you wished to serve me, now is the time." But when that general crossed the Somme, he was filled with apprehensions. "My son," he wrote to the admiral who had married his natural daughter, "I never knew such madness as for Dammartin to have led his men across the river. He risks great dishonour or great loss. Send, I beg, to learn how he is managing matters, and let me hear the news two or three times a day, for I am greatly disquieted. I fear the lord

come off so cheaply. . . . But ungrateful as you are for the good which the king has done you, day by day you plot against him, . . . stirring up his subjects, the lords of his blood, and his neighbours, to be his enemies. . . . Yet this, my sovereign lord and yours, shall amend by the help of God and of our Lady, and of his good and loyal captains and men-at-arms. High and mighty, you write to me in terms which imply that I am one that uses charms; this I have never done. Had I ever practised such an art, I should then have employed it when you led the king to Liège against the will and consent of the princes of his blood, and of the wise men of the realm. But you had so bewitched him that he could not be dissuaded from putting his trust in you, not considering the danger which he ran. Infinite Mercy preserved him from your false and malicious intentions. He did but get thereby the pain and trouble of the journey, and you gained nothing but shame and the loss of your honour. If aught that I write prove displeasing to you, and you should wish to avenge yourself upon me, I trust that before the revels end you may find me so near your army as to learn how little I fear you."

steward has made a mess of it, and that he may be lost by his folly, unless God and our Lady save him and those with him."

Difficult Position of Charles of Burgundy.—Meantime the Dauphin of Auvergne, a prince of the house of Bourbon, was attacking the counties of Charolais and Macon, the Duke Nicholas of Lorraine[9] was threatening the Franche Comté and Burgundy, and the king was expecting the arrival of 3,000 or 4,000 English archers whom Warwick had promised to send to his assistance. So critical did his situation appear that Charles condescended to write a second letter to the constable, reminding him of their former friendship, and begging him to desist at any rate from such violent hostilities. St. Pol thought the time was now ripe for the execution of his scheme. He replied to the duke that nothing but the marriage of his daughter to Charles of France could save him from the dangers by which he was surrounded. If he would consent to this marriage the princes would at once attack the king. The Dukes of Guienne and Brittany wrote secretly in the same strain, exaggerating the difficulties of the duke's position and the promises of support which the king had received from the towns of Flanders and other malcontents. This attempt to intimidate and coerce him on so delicate a point excited the fiercest indignation in the mind of Charles. He conceived a "marvellous hate" of St. Pol, whom he justly deemed to be the leader of the intrigue, a hate which he concealed for the present, but which in due season bore bitter fruit. The Burgundian army, with the exception of the forces of the duchy and the trainbands of the Netherlands, was now assembled, its artillery was numerous and splendid. Charles suddenly attacked Pecquigni, which surrendered after little

[9] Formerly Marquis of Pont, son of Duke John of Calabria.

resistance, crossed the Somme, and besieged Amiens. Dammartin, the admiral, and other renowned captains, with 8,000 men-at-arms and 4,000 archers secured the town, from all danger of assault. The king was at Beauvais with the Dukes of Guienne, Bourbon, and Calabria, and a splendid army of knights and men-at-arms. Dammartin urged him to advance and to attack the Burgundians on all sides in co-operation with himself and the constable. But Lewis remained true to his principle never to stake his fortunes on the chances of a pitched battle. He contented himself with harassing and cutting off the supplies and foraging parties of the duke, who soon found himself in greater distress and more truly besieged in his entrenchments than the defenders of Amiens, while the duchy of Burgundy was being overrun by the Dauphin of Auvergne and other royalist officers.

Overtures of Charles.—He wrote with his own hands a few lines to the king in which he humbled himself before him, and attributed the attack he had made on his suzerain to the evil councils of his advisers. Lewis received these overtures gladly, and a peace for three months, which left the French in possession of Amiens and St. Quentin, was concluded on April 4th, 1471. Dammartin and the army, who were only anxious to crush the Burgundians complained that their prey should thus be snatched out of their clutches. The nation generally could only attribute to the advice of traitors in the king's council the infatuation which appeared to have surrendered the fairest prospect of success.[1] Yet

[1] The duke, says Jean de Troies, "fut en telle misère et poverté qu'il estoit du tout et son dit ost à la disposition et volenté du roy." . . . He expatiates on the discontent excited by the truce: "A cette cause s'en firent à Paris des epitaphes, qui furent mis et assis à St. Innocent, à l'Hôtel de Ville, et aultres lieux, en vitupérant et en donnant grand charge à plusieurs seigneurs estans près du roy."

we cannot doubt the wisdom of this policy. Had the advances of Charles been rejected, he must have agreed to the terms of the princes, and the king would have found himself deserted at the very moment of victory. The Flemish towns had not risen against their count, as those who had urged Lewis to the war had persuaded him to hope. Warwick had not ventured, in opposition to the general feeling of the nation, to send the assistance he had promised; and it seemed that the great earl would need all his craft and resources to maintain himself in his own country. On the 10th of March Edward IV. left Veere in Holland with a fleet of sixteen ships, privately hired for his service by his brother-in-law, who at the same time secretly supplied him with money and other necessaries. The day after the pretender sailed, a proclamation was published in the duke's name threatening with death any one assisting Edward of March, self-styled King of England; for, as has been repeatedly remarked, Charles the Rash was not less treacherous and double-dealing than his rival, although his arrogance and his bursts of passion might sometimes appear bluntness and scorn of dissimulation.

Restoration of Edward IV.—Ten days after the truce between France and Burgundy had been concluded, the holiest of Christian festivals witnessed the slaughter of Barnet and the fall of the house of Neville. The battle of Tewkesbury on the 4th of May shattered the last hopes of the Lancastrians. The young Prince Edward of Wales was slain as he fled from the field. The cautious cruelty of his enemies, or a heart broken by the repeated outrages of fortune, ended the unhappy life of Henry VI.; while the proud hopes and fierce passions of his queen were quenched in a prison, from which she was only rescued five years later by the gold and the interested policy of

Lewis XI. The secure re-establishment of Edward IV. on the throne was a fatal blow to the schemes of the French king. His enemies began to lift up their heads on all sides, and almost openly to plot against him. He vainly endeavoured to keep his brother at his Court in the hope of influencing his weak and vacillating character, and of checking the intrigues of which he was the centre. The Duke of Guienne insisted upon returning to his appanage, and began to sue publicly for the hand of Mary of Burgundy. Charles had learnt by experience the difficulty of contending single handed against the whole force of the kingdom. Now, he thought, was the time to crush Lewis once for all by a general coalition of those who feared his prosperity or hoped to gain by his ruin. The King of Aragon, who had reoccupied Catalonia after the death of John of Calabria, was preparing to attack Roussillon and to avenge himself for the assistance given to his enemies. Castile was alienated by the negotiations with Henry IV. Even the Duchess of Savoy, the sister of the King of France, ungrateful for the assistance which he had repeatedly given her against the brothers of her imbecile husband, joined the hostile league, seduced by the suggestion of Charles that her son might prove the favoured suitor for his daughter's hand. The courtiers of the Duke of Guienne boasted that they would lay so many hounds on the scent that the fox would not know which way to double: his enemies were already invited to see the quarry broken up, and to share in the spoils of the chase.

Divided Aims of the Enemies of Lewis.—Fortunately for Lewis they pursued diverse and inconsistent ends. Charles endeavoured to secure the alliance of the Duke of Guienne by promising his daughter's hand; while he at the same time offered Guienne and Normandy

to Edward IV. as the price of his active co-operation. But Charles of France, even if uninfluenced by patriotic scruples, was little pleased to hear that the English invader was to be rewarded at his expense; while the Duke of Brittany objected to an arrangement so dangerous to the independence of his duchy. Lescun, who still maintained his ascendency in the councils of the two dukes, had ever been averse to the English alliance, and was at the same time jealous of exposing the Duke of Guienne to the imperious influence of Charles of Burgundy. He appears to have united himself closely with the Count of Foix,[2] the most powerful noble of the south, who had hitherto been faithful to the royal cause, but who was discontented because Lewis had decided that his sister Madeleine, the widow of the Prince of Viana, the eldest son of the count, should have the guardianship of her children, in preference to their grandfather. Through the influence of Lescun the eldest daughter of the Count of Foix had been married to the Duke of Brittany, and he now proposed that her younger sister should become the wife of the Duke of Guienne; hoping thus to consolidate a power in the south strong enough to defy the king without the assistance of England or perhaps even of Burgundy.

Edward IV., on the other hand, refused to enter into a league, the basis of which should be the marriage of Mary of Burgundy to Charles of France—a marriage which in the not improbable event of the death of the Dauphin, a young and sickly child, would unite to the crown of France the immense possessions and resources of the house of Burgundy. Rather than see this he would have drawn the sword on behalf of Lewis. It is interesting, in a tedious labyrinth of treacherous intrigues and insincere negotiations, to trace the earliest recognition by English

[2] See above, page 41.

statesmen tha it was more to their country's interest to hold the balance between the powers which disputed the supremacy of the Continent, than to enter upon wild and ambitious schemes of foreign conquest.

Lewis meantime neglected no precaution. He sent a confidential agent to remind the Duke of Guienne by how solemn an oath he was bound not to sue for the hand of Mary of Burgundy. Nor would his perjury be shameful only. The holy cross punished those who insulted its sanctity by death within the year. But he deprecated equally his brother's marriage with Eleanor of Foix. If only he would be guided by him in this matter, there was nothing he was not ready to promise, even to the half of his kingdom. He would appoint him his lieutenant-general, and obtain a papal dispensation to marry him to his daughter Anne. Nicholas, the young duke of Lorraine, to whom she had long been affianced, had joined the league against the king, drawn by that irresistible lure, the offer of the hand of Mary of Burgundy. "Use all your five senses," wrote the king to his ambassador, "to prevent the alliance with the house of Foix. . . . In short, dear Monsieur du Bouchage, if you can but gain this point, you will put me in paradise. Remain till Monsieur de Lescun has gone, even though you should be obliged to sham sickness." Du Bouchage was not, however, very successful. The Duke of Guienne invited the Count of Armagnac, the irreconcilable enemy of his brother, to his court, and appointed him lieutenant-general of his duchy. The king's attempts to detach the Count of Foix from his opponents were not more successful. In despair he turned to his most formidable enemy. He proposed an offensive and defensive alliance with Burgundy against the Dukes of Brittany and Guienne, as the price for which he was willing to restore the places

he had occupied in Picardy, and to surrender the constable and the Count of Nevers to the vengeance of Charles. The Dauphin, scarcely a year old, was to be affianced to Mary of Burgundy, who was already fifteen; the age of the proposed bridegroom was so far in his favour, that it guaranteed his father-in-law from any impertinent interference.

Negotiations of Lewis.—The Duke of Burgundy was busily occupied in organising a standing army on the model of the French companies of ordinance; his attention was distracted by the vastness and diversity of his schemes; he was disappointed by the lukewarmness of Edward IV., and disposed to listen readily to the overtures of Lewis. A preliminary treaty on the basis proposed by the king was signed in October 1471. But either party justly suspected the sincerity of the other. The king would not order the towns to be surrendered till the treaty had been signed by the duke; the duke would not sign till he held the towns. Lewis appears to have been in earnest, and proposed various expedients, which were rejected by the Burgundians. Six months were spent in idle negotiations. The king made use of the delay to strengthen his army, and to win over all who would listen to his blandishments. Among these were two men who, after betraying his confidence, had passed over to the ranks of his bitterest enemies, Antony de Châteauneuf and Philip of Savoy, Count of Bresse. He offered the duchy of Brittany to the King of Scotland, who was invited to assist in the conquest of his future fief. Nor did he neglect to endeavour to obtain help from another quarter. He ordered that a "very fair and notable procession" should be made in all the churches of the kingdom, and entreated the good commons and burgesses of the city of Paris, and all his other towns and lands, "henceforth at mid-day,

when the great bell tolled, to bend a knee to the ground and say each one an 'Ave' for the peace of the realm." This was the origin of the Angelus, a custom since adopted in all Catholic countries. At the same time he obtained a bull from the Pope appointing him and his successors canons of our Lady of Clery, one of his most esteemed idols.

Charles at length made up his mind to sign the treaty abandoning the Dukes of Brittany and Guienne. The royal troops were assembling along the southern frontiers, and their captains eagerly expecting orders to begin operations. With a cynicism remarkable in a prince who regarded himself as the mirror of honour, the Duke of Burgundy wrote to his allies bidding them not to be alarmed at his apparent desertion; that as soon as he had reoccupied the towns of Picardy, he would repudiate his engagements, and hasten to their assistance if they were attacked by the royal forces.

The Death of the Duke of Guienne, 1472.—The envoy who was sent with the treaty signed and sealed by Charles to receive the oath of the king, was astonished to find his audience deferred from day to day, and to be finally dismissed with scant courtesy. "There is no need of further oaths," said the king, "when the game is taken." He had received the long expected news that his brother was dead. Heaven appeared to have heard his prayer, and to have removed the principal cause of his difficulties. The death of a dissipated young man of sickly constitution, who had for eight months suffered from a quartan fever, seems natural enough; but it happened so opportunely that Lewis could not escape the suspicion of a great crime. Such charges were so much a matter of course that he had even been reproached with the death of the Duke John of Calabria, although the loss of that

prince was a serious blow to his interests in the south. The Abbott of St. Jean D'Angely, the almoner of the duke, corresponded with Lewis, and had been in the habit of informing him of the progress of his master's illness.[3] This priest had already been suspected of poisoning the mistress of Charles, in the interest of Lescun, whose influence she opposed. The latter, seeing the ruin of the ambitious hopes which he had rested on his master's aggrandisement, seized the almoner and an officer of the duke's kitchen, accused them of having done away with their master at the instigation of the king, and carried them with him to the Court of Brittany, where they were thrown into prison but never brought to trial, although in 1473, when peace was concluded, Lewis showed great eagerness that they should be fully and publicly examined.[4]

[3] Lewis in a letter written on the 18th of March (Charles of France died the 27th), to Dammartin, says, "I hear that Mons. de Guienne is dying; his illness is incurable; one of his greatest intimates has sent a special messenger to inform me. He does not think the duke will be alive a fortnight hence; that at any rate is the longest he can be made to last. In order that you may feel confidence in the man who sends me this news, I may tell you it is the monk with whom Mons. de Guienne prays. I was so amazed I crossed myself from head to foot."

[4] I unhesitatingly acquit Lewis of his brother's murder. The most circumstantial witness against him, Brantôme, is worthless. That he should have been accused by his enemies at the time was a matter of course. It must, however, be allowed that there was nothing in the manners of the period, little in the character of the man, to make the charge improbable. Fratricide appears, as M. Michelet remarks, to have been an almost universal practice among the princes of the 15th century. Even a moderate amount of sophistry might have seemed to justify Lewis in putting his brother to death. He was a traitor too stout to be dealt with in the ordinary course of law. To a king the safety and welfare of his subjects must ever be the highest rule of action. The life of the Duke of Guienne more than anything else endangered the peace and welfare of France; his death might avert a destructive war, the ruin of a thousand homes, the slaughter of innocent multitudes. "It is expedient that one man should die for the people" has ever appeared a plausible maxim. It is true that in the strange theology of Lewis the heavenly powers regarded rather the outward

Lescun doubtless imagined, and the event justified his sagacity, that the more dangerous his enmity appeared the better would be the terms he might obtain from the king. Dammartin with the royal army was already on the frontiers of Guienne. On the news of the duke's death, they at once entered the duchy, and occupied it without resistance. The courtiers and officers of Charles of France hastened to make their peace with his brother. The Lord of Beaujeu, the future husband of Anne of France and a faithful adherent of the king, was appointed Governor of Guienne. The greater part of the army which had been collected was directed against Brittany in the hopes of intimidating the duke and compelling him to come to terms, or at any rate to prevent his uniting his forces with the Burgundians.

The Duke of Burgundy Invades France.—Charles the Rash was furious at the overthrow of his plans by the death of the Duke of Guienne, and at the refusal of the king to sign the treaty, which was to have put him into possession of Amiens and St. Quentin. He had gained the support of the house of Anjou by allowing his daughter to promise her hand to the Duke of Calabria, who engaged to be her father's faithful and obedient

act than the motives which prompted it; yet they were open to bribes and cajoleries. "He had bought," says a chronicler, "the favour of God and of our Lady for a greater sum than ever king paid," and therefore might claim as his due greater licence of conduct. Yet it is difficult to reconcile with the king's guilt (1.) the lingering sickness of the Duke Charles; (2.) The total absence of any suspicion on his part that he was poisoned, although he was surrounded by enemies of his brother, who would not have failed to suggest such an idea had there been anything to support it in the circumstances of his illness; (3.) The fact that no attempt was made to bring the supposed instruments of the crime to trial or to induce them to confess; (4.) The tone of the king's letters. It has been considered a proof of guilt that he made so little parade of grief on hearing of his brother's death. But had he been guilty he would have been more likely to dissemble his satisfaction.

subject, and his army was assembled, including the new permanent force of 1,200 lances formed in imitation of the French companies of ordinance. Without waiting for the expiration of the truce, which had been prolonged to June 13th, he crossed the Somme in the first week of the month, and began at once to wage a most ruthless and destructive war. The first place where he met with any resistance was Nesle, a small town defended by 500 free archers. Arrows were shot at the duke's men while a capitulation was being arranged; the Burgundians rushed through the open gates, and sacked the town. The commander was hung; those of the archers who were spared lost their right hand. The inhabitants were indiscriminately massacred; neither women nor children, not even those who had taken refuge in the church, escaped. "Such are the fruits of the tree of war," exclaimed the duke. He rode into the church where the dead lay in heaps and the blood flowed above his horse's fetlocks, "I have good butchers with me," he said, crossing himself; "this is a brave sight." Charles the Rash began now to be also called Charles the Terrible. The horror of the sack of Nesle seemed at first profitable to the invaders. Roie, though strongly garrisoned and fortified, surrendered at the first summons. The duke had broken the truce, and commenced hostilities without any declaration of war or public explanation of his motives. He now published a proclamation in which he dwelt on the perfidy of the king, his plots, and encroachments. He accused him of conspiring against his own life, and of having procured the death of the Duke of Guienne by poison and magic. These declamations had no effect. Lewis inspired little love among his subjects, but they dreaded the savage and malignant character of the duke, the enemy of the municipal institutions which the king protected, the disturber

of the public peace. The old popularity of the house of Burgundy was forgotten, and its head stood forth more and more distinctly a foreign and a hostile sovereign.

The King attacks Brittany.—The Count of St. Pol, who had shut himsef up in St. Quentin, wrote in affected alarm to the king begging him to hasten to the defence of his northern provinces. His ill-judged or treacherous advice was disregarded. Lewis had assembled the bulk of his forces on the frontiers of Brittany, had placed himself at their head, and had invaded the duchy. He hoped by pressing with an overwhelming force on the Duke Francis to compel him to come to terms before Charles could effect any very serious diversion. He ordered the constable to dismantle the smaller fortresses, and to distribute his forces in the stronger towns, trusting that Charles would pause in his advance to undertake their siege. These orders were but imperfectly executed. But at the same time Dammartin, the personal enemy and rival of St. Pol, was detached with a powerful force, as much to watch his conduct as to hang upon the rear and flanks of the invading army, cut off its supplies, and as far as possible check its ravages. The wisest course which the duke could adopt was to leave the royal forces shut up in their strongholds, to march straight on into Normandy, and to operate against the king there or in Brittany, in conjunction with his allies. Such was his original intention.

Siege of Beauvais.—He passed by Compiegne and Amiens, which were strongly garrisoned, advancing in the direction of Normandy till he came to Beauvais, an old and populous town of some strength, but unprepared for a siege, and without any garrison except a few of the feudal levies, which had escaped from Roie. Philip de Crèvecœur, who commanded the Burgundian vanguard,

expected to meet with little resistance. But the accounts which had spread of the cruelties and excesses of the duke's army determined the inhabitants to defend themselves to the last. A furious but tumultuary attack was made upon two of the gates of the city. The citizens thronged the walls, and were encouraged by the presence of the clergy bearing the relics of St. Angradesma, the patroness of the city, who forty years before had appeared to defend her worshippers from the English; while their wives and children supplied them with ammunition, handed to them cups of wine, or boldly threw boiling water, pitch, and grease, on the heads of the assailants. A young girl seized a standard, and hurled the Burgundian who had succeeded in planting it upon the walls back into the ditch. Two cannon shots at length burst a way through the gates. As the enemy pressed in, burning fascines were thrown upon their heads; the gates and the portcullis caught fire; the gateway soon became a blazing and impassable furnace. The citizens eagerly kept up this barrier of flame, throwing upon it the doors and furniture and even the wooden gables of the neighbouring houses. The duke himself arrived towards evening. He was indignant at the audacity of the burghers who dared to withstand his arms, and swore to sack and utterly destroy their town. But he neglected the simple precautions which might have made the execution of his threat comparatively easy. Beauvais is divided by a little river, the Thérain. Charles kept all his forces on the north of this stream, making no attempt to invest the town on the south. He, no doubt, trusted that his powerful artillery, which had now come up, would compel a surrender before any reinforcements could reach the townspeople. He was unpleasantly surprised to see even before sunset the armour of several hundred men-at-arms flashing

between the battlements. These were the garrison of Noyon, who on a hot summer's day had ridden fifteen leagues to the assistance of Beauvais. As soon as they entered the town they leapt from their horses, which they left to the care of the women, and hurried to the ramparts. The night was spent in constructing new defences behind the burning gate. On the next day Marshal Rouault arrived with 100 more lances, and shortly afterwards the greater part of the garrison of Amiens, several companies of ordonnance, and the gentry of Normandy. Tables were spread, and casks of wine broached in the streets by the townsfolk, to feast the soldiers who had come to protect their lives and property, their wives and daughters, from the vengeance of the Duke of Burgundy. Beauvais could now only be taken after a regular and probably a lengthy siege. To undertake such a siege would most likely be fatal to the success of his plans, yet Charles could not bear to turn aside from his path, and to appear to acknowledge that any obstacle was too difficult for him to overcome. He sat down before the town, and bombarded it furiously for more than ten days. The walls were breached, but as the investment had not been completed, reinforcements and supplies of all kinds had continued to pour in. The Provost of Paris came with 3,000 soldiers and the best crossbowmen of the civic militia. Rouen and even Orleans sent their contingents. Nevertheless, a general assault was ordered. The duke would not listen to the advice of his most experienced captains. As he was ordering the fascines to be prepared, his brother Baldwin, the "Great Bastard," exclaimed, "We shall need no fascines; our men's bodies will soon fill the ditch!" The ducal troops fought most valiantly; three times their banners were planted upon the walls. But the garrison was numerous enough, says Com-

mines, to have held the hedge of a field against its assailants. The burghers fought not less bravely than before, and the women carried round cups of wine to refresh the combatants. After the assault had continued for three hours, the retreat was sounded. Few of the defenders were killed, but the Burgundian acknowledged a loss of 1,200 men. On the next day the French made a sally, they attacked the artillery of the duke; the commander was killed and a large cannon captured. Charles now began to intend a blockade; but it was too late. The garrison was powerful and well provided with provisions, which sold at a cheaper rate in the town than during peace, while scarcity prevailed in the camp of the besiegers; for Dammartin hung upon their rear, cut off their convoys, and drove back their foraging parties; at the same time heavy rains flooded the valley and twice compelled them to change their position. After a sullen delay of ten days Charles broke up his camp during the night, and advanced into Normandy, burning and ravaging as he went. He published a proclamation, in which he renewed his charges against the king. He was compelled, he said, to defer the punishment of the citizens of Beauvais, although he could easily have obliged them to surrender at discretion, but he might no longer delay to join his brother of Brittany and to avenge the murder of the Duke of Guienne. As he entered Normandy he devastated the rich country on the north of the Seine, sacking and burning the smaller and undefended towns, but without being able to occupy any place of importance; while Dammartin and the other French generals, in obedience to the instructions of the king, avoided any general action, but followed him closely, and harassed his march.

Growing Obstinacy of Charles—He is Compelled to Retreat.—The wisest servants of the duke began to augur no good end from his ever increasing

moodiness, obstinacy, and cruelty. It was about this time that his chamberlain, Philip de Commines, fled from him by night to join a more congenial master. "Commines, although still young, was already the politician who first in modern times wrote history like a philosopher and a statesman. He could no longer endure the sallies and starts of a capricious and overbearing master, and determined to attach himself to a prince more capable of appreciating the depth and extent of his genius." His connection with Lewis had begun at Péronne.[5] They had at once understood each other. The moral side of Commines' nature was by no means predominant, although he was never at a loss for fine sentiments. That he should be deserted by a man of such sagacity was an evil omen for Charles.[6]

The king, who without ceasing to press upon the Duke of Brittany had exerted himself to the utmost to send men and supplies to the assistance of Beauvais, was overjoyed to hear that the siege was raised. He granted the fullest municipal privileges to the brave citizens; he instituted a solemn and annual procession to celebrate the defence of the town, in which the women were allowed to walk before the men clad, notwithstanding all sumptuary laws, in as fine apparel as they chose—a reward for the valour which they had shown so far surpassing the nature of their sex. The king himself hastened to offer to the Virgin, as he had vowed, a silver model of the town, weighing 200,000 marks. Although money was hard to come by this debt must be discharged, else, near as he

[5] See above, p. 137.

[6] The principality of Talmont, the lordship of Olonne and other domains, the captaincy of Chinon, a pension of 6,000 livres, 30,000 gold crowns for the purchase of the estate of Argenton, together with other gifts, did not seem too high a price to the liberality of the king for securing the services of so acute and devoted an adviser.

was to the enemy, he feared that his creditor might show her displeasure by allowing some misfortune to befall him.

Charles advanced as far as the gates of Rouen, but was disappointed to find that it would not be possible for the Duke of Brittany to join him in Normandy; his captains feared that in his blind selfwill he would insist on passing the Seine and pressing forward into Brittany—a step which must have led to the total destruction of his army, which already suffered severely from sickness and want of provisions, and was continually harassed by the royal forces and the determined hostility of the country. In the war of the Public Good the towns had for the most part watched the struggle between the Crown and the princes with indifference. They now defended themselves zealously and stoutly against the Burgundians. The orderly government and the care for the interest of the middle classes displayed by Lewis contrasted favourably with the despotic violence of Charles. The latter contented himself with writing to announce his exploits to his ally, and with encouraging him to fresh exertions, and returned to his dominions after laying waste the domains of St. Pol, who had cruelly devastated Artois and Picardy, even if he had not, as Charles asserted, first set the example of waging war so savagely.

Peace with Brittany.—The king meantime was steadily advancing in Brittany. He had taken Chantocé, Ancenis, and Machecoul and was approaching Nantes. The duke in despair begged for help from England. He acknowledged the sovereignty of Edward IV., who promised shortly to lead a powerful army to his assistance. Lewis, while he waged war, had not ceased to negotiate. The fear of driving Francis of Brittany into the arms of the English led him to offer most liberal terms. On the other

hand Lescun, still the moving spirit at the ducal court, was, as he had always been, averse to the English alliance. He had but recently brought the foulest charges against the king. He had once before received great benefits at his hand, and had immediately afterwards shamelessly betrayed him, yet he was now asked to name his own price.[7] Lewis thought that if he could gain him by giving him whatever he demanded, he would no longer have any motive to turn traitor. It is characteristic of the period that this transaction appeared perfectly natural, and that Lescun is spoken of as an honourable man. Through his instrumentality a treaty was soon concluded with Brittany. The duke received back the places he had lost, and a pension in addition: the King of England and Charles of Burgundy might, if they choose, be included in the truce. Separate negotiations were meanwhile carried on with the latter by the constable in the king's name, and a truce of five months was agreed upon (November 3, 1472). During the discussion of the terms St. Pol insolently gave the lie to the Lord of Humbercourt, one of the most sagacious and influential Burgundian statesmen. Humbercourt answered with dignity and temper, but he never forgot an insult which he was afterwards able to avenge.

Lasting Truce with Burgundy—Change in the Policy of Charles.—This truce differed not from such other temporary suspensions of hostilities as were usually agreed upon at the commencement of the bad season, but it was renewed again and again till May 1475, when, after a few months' desultory warfare, a peace was concluded,

[7] The admiralty of Guienne, captaincy of the castles of Bordeaux, Blaye, &c., a pension of 6,000 livres, 24,000 gold crowns, shortly afterwards the county of Comminges and other domains, with pensions and places for his brother and other aderents. Lescun was henceforward sufficiently loyal.

which lasted till the death of the Duke of Burgundy. It has been repeatedly and justly remarked that the career of Charles the Rash is divided into two periods. During the first he was the leader of the French princes in their struggle against the supremacy of the Crown. His campaigns were fought in France; his territorial ambition was directed towards Picardy and Champagne. During the second period his object was "not to gain a paramount influence within the kingdom of France, not to weaken the French monarchy in the character of one of its vassals, but to throw it into the shade, to dismember, perhaps to conquer it, in the character of a foreign sovereign."[8] The year 1472, that of his last armed conflict with Lewis XI., the year which saw the final failure of the attempt to unite the French princes in a league against the Crown, and at the end of which Charles definitely turned towards the Rhine and embarked more deeply in schemes of aggrandisement in Germany, may rightly be fixed upon as closing the first part of his career. Charles of Burgundy was obstinate, but not persevering like his rival. He could not endure opposition, nor would he condescend to avoid an obstacle which lay in the course he had chosen, and endeavour to reach the goal by an easier path. Hence he often appeared to confuse means and ends, and sacrificed his policy as a whole to success in some subordinate and not essential detail, yet two leading ideas swayed his policy during the latter period of his reign—(1.) To form his hereditary dominions into an independent and comparatively compact kingdom;[9] (2.) To raise himself to the imperial throne. These aims were not inconsistent; the first

[8] Mr. Freeman's Select Essays, Charles the Bold.

[9] It was apparently to contain all that had ever been called Burgundy, and a good deal more; indeed, he aimed at re-establishing the kingdom of Lothaire rather then that of Boso. He told the Estates at

was naturally sugggsted to him by his position, while the imperial dignity seemed the necessary crown of an ambition which aimed at universal supremacy.

It would, doubtless, have been a serious calamity to Europe had Charles succeeded. The time was gone by for regeneration of the world by emperor and Pope; the old vessels of universal temporal and spiritual sovereignty were ill suited to receive the new wine of the vintage that was already ripening. Even if Charles had possessed every quality for rule in which he was wanting, the good that he might have done would have been too dearly purchased. The oppression of Germany, the disruption of the French monarchy, the subjection of Switzerland and of Savoy, would have been among the first fruits of the reign of the new Cæsar. What again would the result have been if Charles, without obtaining the empire, had been able to consolidate his dominions, to acquire Lorraine and Provence, the banks of the Rhine and Switzerland? At first sight we may be tempted to regret that a middle kingdom was not then created "capable of standing in the gap between France and Germany;" but we must remember that the dominions of Charles were destined to pass with his daughter's hand, and although the faults and follies of France should not be extenuated, it would have been a severe blow to the cause of freedom and progress had the Austro-Spanish monarchy of Charles's great-grandson found itself without a rival in Europe. Indeed, it was not the object of the Duke of Burgundy to

Dijon that the kingdom of Burgundy had of old been independent, but this kingdom, "Ceux de France ont long temps usurpé et d'icelui fait duché, que tous les sujets doivent bien avoir à regret et dit qu'il avoit en soi des choses qu'il n'appartenoit de savoir à nul qu' à lui," Michelet, vi. 328. But the duchy, with its capital Dijon, had never belonged to the later kingdoms of Burgundy or Arles (see Bryce, Holy Roman Empire, p. 438), which, on the other hand, had included Provence, Savoy, and a part of Dauphiny and Switzerland.

found a pacific middle kingdom, but rather to build up a power from the plunder of the empire and the ruins of France even more aggressive and dangerous to its neighbours. The existence of Switzerland and Savoy, the future independence of Holland might have been sacrificed, and no better means provided for performing the functions which, however imperfectly, they have discharged in European politics. But probably even had the duke been able to subdue the provinces he coveted, no skill, no combination of favourable circumstances could ever have welded such jarring elements into a consistent whole. Not only would the new kingdom have been weakened by the discordant interests, the mutual repulsion, the desire for independence of its component parts, not only would it have been united by no common bond, have been based on no community of race, of language, of history, of law, of trade, or of personal loyalty, but it would, with an indefensible frontier, have been exposed to the constant attacks of neighbours by whose losses it had grown, or whose existence it threatened.

The dangers which beset the path on which his rival was about to enter did not escape the sagacity of Lewis. So certain did the result appear, that, although he secretly encouraged the enemies of the duke, and inflamed the uneasiness and hatred excited among his neighbours by his restless ambition, he carefully avoided giving any open occasion of offence, and was ready to buy the prolongation of the truce by the most liberal concessions. "It seemed to some," says Commines, "that the king ought not to have prolonged the truce, nor to have suffered the duke's presumption to wax so great. . . . There were others[1] who understood this matter better, and whose knowledge was greater, because they had been upon the spot. These

[1] Liv. iv. chap. 1. Commines doubtless means himself.

advisers urged him to accept the truce without misgiving, and to allow the duke to dash himself against those German countries, whose might and power is such as to be well nigh incredible; for, they said, that when the duke had taken one place, or ended one war, he would at once begin another, . . . and that the king could in no way avenge himself more easily than by leaving him to himself, and that he would even do well to assist him somewhat, and, above all, not to allow him to suspect that the truce might be broken; for it was certain that all his resources would be spent and utterly wasted against the great size and strength of Germany."

Charles acquires Guelders and attempts to seize Lorraine.—The more immediate objects of the policy of the Duke of Burgundy was to render himself master of the course of the left bank of the Rhine, and by the acquisition of Lorraine to connect the Burgundies with his dominions in the Netherlands. He had obtained the preponderance on both sides of the upper Rhine by occupying Alsatia and the Breisgau in 1409. He acquired Guelders and Zutphen in 1473. The old Duke Arnold of Guelders had been imprisoned and treated with the utmost cruelty by his son Adolphus. The Duke of Burgundy obtained the emperor's commission to compel the young duke to liberate his father and to submit to his arbitration. Charles seized Adolphus, and caused him to be condemned by the Chapter of the Golden Fleece—a perfectly illegal tribunal, since he could only be tried by his peers, the princes of the empire. He was declared to have forfeited his right of inheritance. The old Duke Arnold, whose misgovernment was odious, and weakness contemptible, was compelled to sell the duchy to his judge. No notice was taken of the just claims of his grandchildren—the nephews by marriage of the prince

who thus robbed them of their birthright. The city of Nimeguen alone braved the power of Burgundy in defence of its youthful lord, but was compelled to surrender after beating back a fierce assault, in which a body of 500 English, serving in the ducal army, was entirely cut to pieces.

About the same time (August 1473) Nicholas of Calabria, the son of the celebrated Duke John, died suddenly while preparing to besiege Metz, which he had treacherously and unsuccessfully attempted to surprise. As was usual, the King of France was accused by his enemies of having caused him to be poisoned. For Duke Nicholas, after being affianced to the Princess Anne, had broken his word in the hope of obtaining the hand of Mary of Burgundy. His death released Charles from engagements which he had no intention of keeping, and gave him, as he supposed, an opportunity of seizing Lorraine. The Duke of Calabria was the last male heir of his grandmother, the Duchess Isabel of Lorraine, wife of King René. Next in succession was his aunt Yolande, Countess of Vaudemont, who had married the son of that Count of Vaudemont who had been the rival claimant of the duchy [2]. The Countess Yolande conveyed her rights to her son René, a brave and genial youth, who thus united the claims of both branches of his family. Charles, without pretext or shadow of justification, seized and imprisoned the young duke, and prepared to annex his dominions.

[2] Charles Duke of Lorraine left two daughters, of whom the eldest, Isabel, was married to René of Anjou. He caused her to be recognised as his successor by the nobility of the duchy, but after his death her claim was disputed by Antony of Vaudemont, the son of Ferri, the younger brother of the late Duke. He asserted that Lorraine was a male fief.

Negotiation and Interview of the Duke of Burgundy with the Emperor Frederic III.—Negotiations for the marriage of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian of Austria had been opened in 1470, about the time when Duke Sigismund, the emperor's cousin, pawned his Alsatian dominions to the Duke of Burgundy. Sigismund, if not its originator, appears at least to have been extremely zealous in advocating this scheme for uniting the interests of the two houses. One great marriage had raised the Hapsburgs above the princely families of the Empire; a second might secure to them a like preponderance on the wider stage of European politics. Charles, on the other hand, could not without the assistance of the Emperor Frederic, sluggish, miserly, mean-spirited, and discredited as he was, carry out his plans of aggrandisement against the free cities and ecclesiastical principalities of the Rhineland, nor re-establish the Burgundian kingdom, still less be acknowledged the successor elect of Cæsar.

Maximilian of Austria was a brave and active youth, in no way resembling his father, and it might have been supposed that the paternal solicitude of the Duke of Burgundy would welcome the opportunity of securing for his daughter a husband not incapable of protecting her against the dangers to which she would be exposed in the event of his own death. But he was determined not to be hampered with a son-in-law, and trusted to secure all the advantages that were offered without other return than insincere promises. Yet the terms which he proposed, and which afterwards became a basis for negotiations, were as much to his advantage as if he had been in earnest in the matter. He would agree to the marriage if the emperor would secure to him "the crown and government of the empire of the Romans, on the condition that the duke in

obtaining the imperial dignity by the abdication or death of the emperor, should obtain the kingdom of the Romans for his son-in-law." The hereditary dominions of the duke were in any case to be consolidated and dignified with the regal title, and he was to have the authority of imperial vicar in the countries on the west bank of the Rhine. He would give no dowry with his daughter, but if a son were thereafter born to him she should receive 100,000 florins at his death—a poor compensation for the loss of a more than royal inheritance. The emperor must settle an income of 50,000 florins on his son, besides lordships suitable to his dignity, and lands to the value of 10,000 florins a-year on Mary. As for Duke Sigismund, whom Charles had taken under his protection, "as if belonging to his household and his servant, he would avenge him upon the Swiss as he had promised in convenient season."

After the failure of his plans in France, the negotiations with the emperor were resumed by the Duke of Burgundy with greater earnestness. It was arranged that they should meet at Metz during the autumn of 1473. But that city, jealous of its independence, which had been so often threatened and so nobly defended, refused to surrender the keys of its gates to the duke, or to admit him into its walls with more than 500 attendants. Charles was incensed by a caution which ventured to divine his intentions—"I hold already the gates of your city" he exclaimed, pointing to the 400 cannon which accompanied him. The scene of the interview was transferred to Trier. The emperor, who had arrived first, came forth to meet his vassal, who would have knelt before him, but was prevented by his courtesy. Frederic insisted that they should ride into the town side by side; and after a decent resistance of half an hour the humility of the duke was persuaded to consent to such apparent presumption. But

notwithstanding theatrical and carefully ordered cordiality, the meeting of two such princes and their courts could not fail to excite mutual dislike and suspicion. The Germans affected to scorn the ostentatious splendour of the Burgundians, the latter sneered at the boorishness and want of culture of their less polite allies. The courtiers of the duke insisted that in all but empty titles their master was pre-eminent, and that the emperor had acknowledged this by the distance he had travelled to meet him. The imperial majesty, it was replied, was like the sun, and allowed the rays of its presence to fall upon even the most distant and obscure potentates. Five weeks the negotiations continued, but the longer they lasted the farther seemed the probability of a satisfactory agreement. The demands of the Burgundians now comprised the incorporation in the new kingdom of the four bishoprics of Utrecht, Liège, Cambrai, and Tournai, and the investiture of the duchies of Guelders and Lorraine. Frederic received the homage of Charles as Duke of Guelders, but Lorraine was restored to René of Vaudemont. The King of France had imprisoned a nephew of the emperor, who was studying at Paris, as an hostage for the safety of the young duke, and his troops were preparing to occupy the duchy. Anxious as Lewis was to avoid a war, he could not tamely acquiesce in the seizure by his rival of Lorraine, a province the possession of which would so greatly consolidate his power. Charles, although he released René, almost secured his object; he won by liberal promises the most powerful Lotharingian nobles, and their duke signed as the price of his liberty a treaty which surrendered four fortresses, and allowed the passage of Burgundian troops through his dominions.

The emperor, who was not deficient in shrewdness, began to be more and more suspicious of the sincerity of

Charles in offering his daughter's hand. If he was in earnest why had he not brought her with him? Why would he appoint no time for the marriage? The Duke often said to his intimates that he would as soon put on the cowl at once as submit to have a son-in-law. Such careless words may have been repeated, and the agents of the King of France were at hand to exaggerate the misgivings of the Germans. The emperor listened coldly while the Chancellor of Burgundy enlarged upon the ingratitude, the perfidy, the crimes of Lewis, the treacherous enemy of his neighbours, the oppressor of his nobles and kinsmen, the murderer of his brother. It was, he said, impossible to bestow the reversion of the imperial crown without obtaining the consent of the electors, or at least consulting those of them who were absent. It was not so easy to find a pretext for refusing the promised regal dignity. It was certain that the emperor might not, by naming a successor, or by abdication, frustrate the prerogative of the electoral college; it was equally certain that he was fully competent to confer any temporal title short of that of Augustus and Cæsar. The day for the coronation was fixed. Sceptre and crown and royal robes were prepared; the Church of Our Lady of Trier was sumptuously decorated; two lofty thrones had been raised, one for the emperor, the other but little lower for the new king. Two days before that appointed for the ceremony the representatives of the emperor announced that nothing could be definitely settled till the next February. The remonstrances of the Burgundians were long and loud. Charles had brought with him 14,000 picked soldiers, and what had happened at Péronne was a warning to those who when in his power endeavoured to elude the expectations they had excited. Like Bonaparte, he excelled in the art of making the outbursts of his imperious

temper politically useful. Frederic determined not to expose himself to the inconvenience, or the imperial majesty to the disrespectful reproaches which he might anticipate from the disappointment and anger of the duke. During the next night he dropped quietly and swiftly down the Moselle in a boat which had been prepared to receive him. When his flight was discovered he was already beyond reach of pursuit. Charles was obliged to return, furious at having wasted so much time and trouble only to be made the laughing stock of Europe. But what he had seen of the emperor encouraged him to believe that if he was unwilling to assist he would also be incapable of opposing the ambitious schemes he cherished.

Punishment of Armagnac and Alençon.—Lewis meanwhile was employing the truce to crush one of the most inveterate and ungrateful of his domestic enemies. The Count of Armagnac had taken advantage of the king's difficulties in 1472 to enter once more into engagements with the English and Burgundians, and had openly revolted. He was at once attacked by the Lord of Beaujeu, the Governor of Guienne, and compelled to sue for terms; but after the agreement had been signed, Beaujeu foolishly dismissed his troops and allowed himself to be surprised by the count in Lectoure. As soon as the king was able to turn his attention to the south, he sent the Cardinal Archbishop of Albi, who had earned the name of "the butcher of Arras," by his cruel persecution of some sectaries in his former diocese, to release Beaujeu, and to punish the repeated treachery of Armagnac. The latter was allowed to hope that a capitulation would be accepted, lest his despair should prove fatal to his prisoners. But before the terms had been agreed upon, the French soldiers burst in and sacked the town. In the confusion the count was killed. Such at least was the

story of the Government.[3] Details of treachery and horror were afterwards added. Of these some are palpable inventions, while others in themselves not improbable rest on no contemporary evidence.

The Duke of Alençon, whose property had been restored, and whose treason had been pardoned by Lewis, had again entered into engagements with the English, and had declared his intention of selling his domains to the Duke of Burgundy, and seeking a refuge at his Court. Before he could do so, he was arrested by Tristan L'Hermite, and condemned by the Parliament to lose life and estates. The king, however, refused to allow the sentence to be carried out, and contented himself with detaining his godfather under safe custody.

Danger of St. Pol.—After reigning ten years, Lewis was surrounded by the ministers of his father, whom he had at first disgraced, while the prisoners whom he had liberated, Armagnac, Alençon, and others, had again suffered the penalties of repeated treason and ingratitude. In an age of perfidy and intrigue, the faithlessness of the Count of St. Pol had been conspicuous. Charles of Burgundy remembered with the bitterest resentment the attempt of the constable to compel him to marry his daughter to the Duke of Guienne; the king hated the prime mover of an intrigue which had for a time eluded even his restless suspicion;[4] he proposed to his rival that they should unite to punish a man equally dangerous and false to both. He offered the larger share of the spoil to

[3] The chief instrument of Armagnac's crime, Amboise de Cambrai, who had forged the papal bulls authorising the count's incestuous marriage with his sister, and who was guilty of an atrocious murder, was pardoned by the king, provided for by a pension, raised to the judicial bench, and finally appointed Chancellor of the University of Paris.

[4] See above, p. 157.

the duke, the strong castles of Ham and Bohain, even St. Quentin. His proposals were accepted; the details had been arranged, when he suddenly suspected that if at the last St. Pol threw himself upon the mercy of Charles, and appealed to his past services and old friendship, they might be reconciled at his expense. The French envoys were ordered to withdraw the terms they had offered, and an interview was granted to the constable, at which he was allowed to require the precautions usual at the meeting of equal and hostile princes. He promised henceforth to be loyal, and the king assured him of his forgiveness on that condition. Not long afterwards he again offered to the Duke of Burgundy to seize Lewis, dead or alive, and to drive the queen and the dauphin out of the country.

War in Roussillon.—The Count of Foix, the most powerful noble of the south, died in 1472, leaving his dominions to his young grandson, the nephew of Lewis XI. But at the very moment when the preponderance of the Crown appeared to be finally secured on the Pyrenean frontier by his death and by the ruin of the Armagnacs, Roussillon broke out into fierce and successful revolt. King John of Aragon, whose courage and ability had been greatly paralysed by blindness, recovered his sight by the skill of a Jewish physician, who couched him for cataract, an operation then unknown in Europe. The death of John of Calabria enabled the old king to re-establish his authority in Catalonia, and he had conciliated his rebel subjects by a prudent leniency. The inhabitants of Roussillon, who were crushed by taxes and oppressed by their new masters, rose against them; the French were massacred or driven out the three strong castles of Salces, Collioure, and Perpignan. King John was joyfully welcomed in the latter town, and at once began the siege of the citadel.

The garrison defended themselves for ten weeks, till they were relieved by the Cardinal of Albi with the troops which had been employed against Armagnac, who was joined by the Count of Bresse at the head of the forces of Languedoc. John of Aragon was now in his turn besieged. The citizens, inspired by the example of the old king, who, although in his 77th year, refused to avoid any danger or fatigue, sustained the siege with obstinacy and valour, till the approach of Ferdinand of Aragon with a powerful army, the heat of the climate, and a pestilential season compelled the French to retreat. Lewis, although his captains were soon again in a position to resume hostilities, preferred negotiations. It was agreed that Roussillon and the Cerdagne should be neutralised and governed by officers appointed conjointly by the kings of France and Aragon, till the latter had repaid the 200,000 crowns for which those counties had been pledged; and this he engaged to do within a year.

During the siege of Perpignan, Lewis XI. had endeavoured to secure an ally in the house of Aragon itself. He instructed his friend Lorenzo de' Medici, to propose secretly to King Ferdinand of Sicily a marriage between his daughter and the dauphin. Lewis was willing to abandon the claims of the house of Aragon if Ferdinand would assist him against his uncle in Spain. The proposal was rejected. The King of Sicily said that he could not with honour attack his relations, and that he was the ally of Charles of Burgundy. Like so many others, he cherished the hope of obtaining the hand of Mary of Burgundy for his son. The King of France cannot justly be blamed for betraying the interests of the house of Anjou. Nothing but the weak character, the indolent, self-indulgent, and romantic disposition of his uncle King René had prevented him from being a most dangerous

enemy. He had never indeed openly joined the adversaries of his nephew, but he was almost constantly in communication with them, and he had approved the dishonourable conduct of his grandson Nicholas of Calabria, who, after engaging to marry Anne of France, and receiving part of her dower, had joined the Duke of Burgundy and the band of his daughter's suitors. Even the Duke of Bourbon, notwithstanding the favours showered upon him and upon his family, had corresponded with the king's adversaries during the late troubles. Lewis, although aware of this treachery, betrayed no resentment, and bestowed the hand of his daughter Anne on Peter of Bourbon, Lord of Beaujeu, the brother and heir of the duke, whose fidelity he had indeed no reason to suspect. He endeavoured at the same time to secure his influence over the house of Orleans by marrying his daughter Jane to the little Duke Charles. The bride was nine, the bridegroom eleven years old. Beaujeu became the docile instrument of his young wife, who inherited much of the character and ability of her father, but the married life of Jane was unfortunate and pathetic; her virtues and passionate though patient love only increased the aversion which her deformity and want of grace inspired in her husband.

Repeated Treachery of the Duke of Brittany.—Although the king scrupulously observed and renewed the truce with Burgundy, he was well aware of the persistent hostility of Charles, while Francis of Brittany had hardly recovered the castles and towns which the French had occupied during the war before he again began to negotiate with Edward IV. Notwithstanding the opposition of Lescun, whose influence began to yield to that of a baser favourite, a tailor, who by the vilest services had obtained the confidence of his master and high position at the Court. The Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany endeavoured

to tempt the English king to invade France by the largest offers of assistance. Lewis, who was well acquainted with their intrigues, dissembled his knowledge, and affected even to carry on his negotiations with the Burgundian Court through the Breton ambassadors. He rejoiced to meet his enemies in a contest of duplicity and intrigue, in which he felt that his superior skill and experience would have full play.

Mediation of Rome.—The Court of Rome, alarmed by the progress of the Turks, and the avowed intention of the sultan to invade Italy, had made several efforts to mediate between the king and the "great duke of the west," as Charles was called. Lewis had the address to throw the odium of the failure of these attempts upon his rival. He had received the distinguished Bessarion, who was first sent as papal legate, with little courtesy,[5] for the cardinal had protested against his treatment of Balue. But the next representative of the Pope, although less learned, was more successful. He obtained a satisfactory compromise with regard to the ever-disputed claims of the Pope to confer French benefices, and to enjoy the revenues of those which were vacant. In return for this concession a bull was fulminated, declaring that prince who would not agree to peace excommunicated. Lewis protested of his readiness to accept peace on any reasonable terms, and affected to consider that Charles had fallen under the ban of the Church. But the Parliament of Paris objected

[5] Brantôme says that when the learned Greek had, after long delay, been admitted to an interview, and had addressed the king in a prolix and scholarly oration, the only answer the latter deigned was to take hold of the long beard which the churchman wore after the fashion of his country, and to quote a verse from the Latin grammar, "Barbara Græca genus retinent quod habere solebant." The authority of Brantôme is of little value, but the story agrees well with the caustic and irrepressible humour of Lewis, and his known distaste for set and lengthy speeches.

that the interference of the Vatican in the politics of the kingdom established a pernicious precedent, and refused to take cognisance of the papal briefs.

Burgundian Rule in Alsatia.—The Duke of Burgundy, after his disappointment at Trier, had passed through Lorraine, and was received at Nanci as if he had been the lord of the land. He was on his way to visit his newly acquired domains in Alsatia and Swabia. He had dismissed the bulk of his forces, but was still attended by 5,000 men-at-arms, for the most part Lombard mercenaries, whose ferocity and licence his presence scarcely restrained. The government of the districts, pledged by Sigismund of Austria, had been entrusted to Peter of Hagenbach, a man of obscure origin, who had zealously served the duke and his father. It was he who, when during an illness the physicians ordered the head of Philip the Good to be shaved, had undertaken to dock the hair of such nobles as he met in the streets of Bruges, that the misfortune of his master might not be insulted by the sight of the flowing locks on other men's heads. At the siege of Dinant he had done more serious service in command of the artillery. The task he had to perform in Alsatia was not easy. The country had been weakly governed, nobles and towns had done pretty much what was right in their own eyes. The Austrians and Swabians only tolerated the Burgundians in the hope that they would avenge them on their old enemies the Swiss. The Swiss regarded their new neighbour with profound suspicion, and were almost aggressive in their loud assertion of their rights, and in their indignant resentment of the slightest injury in word or deed. Hagenbach, we may presume, was instructed to establish order in the countries he governed, to administer justice impartially and sternly, to extend Burgundian influence in the free cities, and care-

fully to avoid any occasion of quarrel with the Confederates, whom Charles was anxious at the moment not to drive into the arms of the King of France. It would scarcely have been possible to establish the despotic administration, on which Charles insisted, in the Rhineland without exciting much opposition; but Hagenbach, while he repressed the irregularities of nobles and robbers, allowed himself unbounded licence. His justice would have made the Burgundian rule unpopular, his injustice inspired the deepest hatred. Although the towns had stipulated that their charters and immunities should be observed, they found that when they protested against illegal excess their remonstrances were punished as if treasonable; the country folk were oppressed by forced labour and other exactions; the dearest privilege of the nobility, that of hunting, was attacked; the neighbouring imperial towns, Strasburg, Schleestadt, Colmar, and the independent barons of Swabia, were insulted and threatened. No rank or age or sex was secure from the tyranny and the brutal passions of the bailiff.

Charles and the Swiss.—Charles appears to have insisted that in essentials the Swiss should have no reason for complaint. Hagenbach was compelled to restore a small district claimed by Bern which he had occupied; but he distressed their allies, and spoke of the cantons in contemptuous and menacing terms. Such conduct greatly facilitated the schemes of those among the Confederate leaders who were hostile to Burgundy.[6] These were not

[6] In order that the reader may understand the relations of Charles the Rash and the Swiss, he ought to bear in mind what the extent and position of Switzerland then was. This is clearly explained by Mr. Freeman in his review of Mr. Kirk's Charles the Bold, republished in his Select Essays. I take the liberty of quoting a part of what he there says: "In those days the name of Switzerland, as a distinct nation or people, was hardly known. The names *Switenses*, Switzois,

those alone who had been won by the gold and promises of Lewis XI. The negotiations of the duke with the emperor at Trier had excited the greatest alarm among all neighbouring states. The Council of Bern, besides sending a most unnecessary embassy to warn the French king, had announced to its allies that the limits of the new kingdom of Burgundy had been determined. They were to embrace Savoy and Milan, and whatever cities and provinces south and east of the Jura had been comprised in the earlier Burgundian states, including, therefore, Bern itself, and the greater part of the territory of the League. Many, no doubt, who sincerely believed that it was their country's interest not to delay an inevitable conflict, and to meet on foreign soil an enemy whose ambition was dangerous to their independence, may have con-

Suisses, were indeed beginning to spread themselves from a single canton to the whole Confederation; but the formal style of that Confederation was still the 'Great, or Old, League of Upper Germany,' perhaps rather of 'Upper Swabia' (Allemania). That league was much smaller than it is now, and *it was purely German.* It consisted of eight German districts and cities, united, like many other groups of German cities, by a lax federal tie, which tie, while other unions have died away, has gradually developed into a perfect federal government, and has extended itself over a large non-German territory. The League then consisted of eight cantons only—Zurich, Bern, Luzern, Uri, Schwyz. Unterwalden, Zug, and Glarus. All these states were practically independent commonwealths: in theory they were immediate subjects of the emperor, holding certain large franchises by ancient grant or prescription. Moreover, the League was looked upon as an eminently advancing, not to say aggressive, power; it was always extending its boundaries, always winning new allies and subjects, which stood in various relations to the older cantons. Bern, above all, was always conquering, purchasing, admitting to citizenship in a way which afforded a close parallel to old Rome. . . . But as yet, with all its advances, the League itself had not set foot on *Welsh*, that is, Romance-speaking ground. Neufchâtel, Geneva, Vaud, even Freiburg, were not yet members or even allies of the Confederation, though some of them stood in close relation to the particular canton of Bern. . . . The strictly German character of the League, and its close relation to the empire, must never be allowed to pass out of mind."

sented to receive French money, just as members of the English Parliament were not ashamed to be paid by Lewis XIV. for a conscientious opposition to the Government of Charles II.

The Duke of Burgundy, meantime, was endeavouring to conciliate his new subjects. His words were fair, but they could inspire little confidence, since he was accompanied everywhere by Hagenbach; and his troops committed great excesses when not restrained by his immediate presence. At Ensisheim he was met by the envoys of Bern, who complained of the insults of Hagenbach, and interceded on behalf of their ally, the imperial town of Mülhausen, from which the governor had endeavoured by various vexations to extort the payment of an old and doubtful debt. They were not immediately answered, but seem to have been treated with courtesy and consideration. From the Rhine Charles proceeded to Dijon, where he was most magnificently received. He was more popular in the Burgundies than in any other part of his dominions—partly because he had never lived there, partly because, while he oppressed his subjects in the Netherlands with taxation, he was content that the poverty of Burgundy should supply him with soldiers and statesmen. In his speech to the Estates he spoke of the great projects he entertained, but which he might not as yet disclose, in terms which renewed the apprehensions of all those who feared that he would satisfy his ambition at their expense: while Hagenbach continued, as it seemed with the duke's approval, to oppress the Alsatians and to encroach upon the independence of their neighbours. The stories of his cruelty and of his lustful insolence are no doubt exaggerated, yet no ordinary severity and harshness could account for the loathing and terror which he inspired.

Coalition against Burgundy.—The time had come for Lewis XI. to strain every nerve to bring about the coalition against Burgundy which he had for some time begun to prepare. Sigismund of Austria, disappointed that his quarrel against the Swiss had not been espoused, and also perhaps moved by the complaints of his late subjects, had proposed to transfer his services and his pawned dominions to the King of France, provided that Lewis would enable him to do so by advancing the sum which he owed to the Duke of Burgundy. His ambassadors were graciously received, but they were told that such proposals could only be entertained if the Duke of Austria would be reconciled with the Swiss. An alliance between the Confederates and the house of Austria might have appeared impossible to any but the man who had seen the son of Margaret of Anjou marry the daughter of Warwick at the bidding of his policy. Nor was he less successful in the present instance. It is not so strange that the Swiss should have consented to lay aside their enmity. They had been the conquerors; the glories of Morgarten and Sempach had effaced old and half mythical tales of oppression. Their position in the empire and in Europe would be less ambiguous if the heir of their former masters acknowledged their independence. It seemed far stranger that the Duke of Austria should treat on equal terms with men whom he had always affected to consider rebel vassals, whose enmity and the hope of revenge upon whom had led him to part with his dominions. But he may have judged that if he was to be baulked of his triumph over the Confederates, he had best join those who could help him to recover the lordships he had lost. When he had once made up his mind he appears to have yielded with good grace, and celebrated his reconciliation with his ancestral enemies by a pilgrimage to the cele-

brated shrine of Einsiedlen, which lay in the very heart of the mountains which had been the cradle of their liberty. Basel and Strasburg, the Margrave of Baden, and the free Alsatian cities, were easily induced to join Sigismund of Austria and the Swiss in a defensive league.

The Duke of Burgundy was indignant at the conduct of Sigismund; but it was a more serious matter that the Swiss should join the ranks of his enemies at a moment when his attention and his energies were fully engaged in another quarter. He sent an embassy headed by the Count of Romont, a prince of Savoy, the neighbour and friend of the Confederates, to remonstrate with them on their desertion of their old ally, and to offer an inquiry into any just ground of complaint which they might allege. The Burgundian envoys were received even at Bern, the headquarters of the French party, with protestations of friendship, coupled only with some complaints of the conduct of Hagenbach. The other cantons professed themselves the firm and grateful allies of the Burgundian prince. But his ambassadors seem to have addressed themselves as far as possible to the multitude, who knew little of foreign policy or of the motives which influenced those who were better versed in public affairs. Bern, Luzern, and Zürich were throughout the leaders of the party opposed to Burgundy; and this agreement among towns, not usually unanimous, but whose position and wider commercial and political relations, enabled them to form a better judgment in such matters, seems at any rate to show that it was not obviously contrary to the interests of Switzerland to join the league against Charles, even though we may allow that the statesmen of the larger towns were more susceptible to the bribes of Lewis, more desirous of territorial aggrandisement and of interfering in the affairs of their neighbours than the farmers and

shepherds of the ruder cantons. It was not long before the results of the new league began to be felt. Strasburg and Basel advanced to Sigismund the 80,000 crowns for which Ferette and Alsatia were pledged to the Duke of Burgundy. He alleged that the necessary formalities had not been complied with, and refused to receive the money. But the inhabitants had already driven out the Burgundian garrisons; Hagenbach himself was seized at Breisach, and beheaded by sentence of a court composed of the representatives of the allies, and presided over by the lieutenant of the Duke of Austria.[7] Such an insult as the execution of his representative and the expulsion of his troops was certain to arouse the furious resentment of Charles. He ordered Stephen of Hagenbach to invade Alsatia at the head of a sufficient body of troops and to revenge his brother by devastating the country, which was rejoicing somewhat prematurely at its escape from Burgundian rule. Hagenbach was executed in the spring of 1474. During the following summer the King of France was busily engaged in negotiations with the Swiss, pointing out to them that they were bound to protect the dominion of their new ally against the attacks of the Burgundians, and supporting his arguments by lavish gifts both to the cantons and to private persons. By a treaty, which was ratified at Luzern on October 25th, 1474, the Confederates engaged to assist the king with a force of 6,000 men, who were to receive from him pay at the rate of 4½ florins a month. In return he promised to

[7] Hagenbach's death would have done honour to a nobler life. Mr. Kirk lays stress on this, and on the veneration shown his memory as disproving the charges against him. But Gilles de Laval, the notorious Marshal de Retz, who had murdered hundreds of children under circumstances of the most frightful atrocity, edified the fifteenth century by his Christian death, which led some to revere him as a saint.

pay the Confederates 20,000 florins annually, and if, in case of war, it was not convenient to assist them otherwise, he undertook to pay them 20,000 additional florins every three months. On the 20th of December the defiance of the "burgomasters, advoyers, landammans, councillors, and commons of the League of Upper Germany" was formally sent to the Duke of Burgundy. He received it in his camp before Neuss: "Bern, Bern," he muttered, in accents of bitter disappointment or suppressed fury. Soon afterwards he heard that a body of Swiss had joined the Alsatians, and had totally routed the forces of the Franche-Comté and a body of Lombard mercenaries, commanded by the Count of Romont at Héricourt, on the frontiers of Alsatia and the county of Burgundy.

Charles and Cologne—Siege of Neuss.—Charles the Rash had been occupied during the summer of 1474 in an attempt to consolidate his power on the Lower Rhine, and to repeat at Cologne the policy which had succeeded at Liège. An ecclesiastical state, which could not be annexed, must be governed in the name of its spiritual prince. Robert of Bavaria, Archbishop-Elector of Cologne, had been expelled by the chapter and people, and invoked the assistance of the Duke of Burgundy. He at once prepared to chastise the disobedient flock of his suppliant. The army which he assembled was splendid in discipline and equipment. Besides the companies of ordonance formed on the French model, and his powerful artillery, he was accompanied by 3,000 English archers, and he had commissioned the Count of Campo Basso, a Neapolitan refugee, who had followed the fortunes of John of Calabria, and the Signor Galeotto, to enlist a large body of Lombard mercenaries in addition to those already in his service. Nothing, he flattered himself, could withstand such forces led by such a general as himself; but he did

not expect any serious opposition. Why should the Germans who had allowed him to occupy Guelders, exert themselves to save Cologne? He forgot the jealousy with which the princes of the empire regarded any interference with the rich bishoprics and chapters, which provided for their younger sons, his quarrel with the house of Austria, and the increased fear inspired by his ambitious projects, all the more alarming because vague and only partially known. The Landgrave of Hesse and his brother Hermann, who had been appointed administrator of the diocese, threw themselves into Neuss, a strong fortress on the Rhine, where they were at once besieged by Charles (July 1474). He would not interrupt his plan of operations to punish the Duke of Austria and his allies, that he could easily accomplish at a more convenient season, for he still trusted to secure the neutrality of the Swiss. In all that was done against him, he recognised the untiring hostility of the King of France, but never since the war of the Public Good had there appeared a more favourable opportunity of crushing this arch-enemy.

League against Lewis XI.—Edward IV., though himself little disposed to war, saw in an invasion of France the means of restoring his finances, of strengthening his waning popularity, and of obtaining from the Duke of Brittany the surrender of Gaspar Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, and of his nephew, Henry of Richmond, who had been thrown upon the Breton coast when escaping after the fatal field of Tewkesbury. The King of Aragon, supported by the power of Castile, would attack the south; the Duchess of Savoy had persuaded Galeazzo Sforza, Duke of Milan, to abandon the alliance of her brother for that of Burgundy; the galleys of the Sicilian King would threaten the coasts of Languedoc, and the Bretons cooperate with the English in Normandy.

King René and his nephew, the Count of le Maine, promised to join the king's enemies, and even the Duke of Bourbon did not refuse to listen to their overtures. Edward IV. could not, indeed, be ready to cross till the next summer, but in the meantime Charles expected to restore Robert of Bavaria to his see, to drive the Austrians out of Alsatia, and to collect and prepare his forces for the invasion of France. The king had eagerly consented to the renewal of the truce for another year—at its expiration all would be ready for his destruction. Even to us, who judge by the light of subsequent events, the policy of Lewis, which consisted in trusting to the difficulties in which it was likely that Charles would be involved by his obstinacy and blind confidence, appears somewhat hazardous. The affair of Cologne might have been amicably arranged, nor could the obstinate resistance of Neuss have been foreseen; while, by a little moderation and tact, Charles might have concluded a new alliance with the Swiss, and have re-established his preponderance on the Upper Rhine by the time that his allies were prepared to take the field: and Lewis was well aware that the first reverse of the French arms would have been the signal of civil war.

But the king was not inactive while the strength of the Burgundian army was being shattered against the brave obstinacy of the defenders of Neuss. He ordered his captains to conduct the war which had broken out in Roussillon with all possible vigour. It was in vain that the old King of Aragon, whose spirit neither years nor disaster could subdue, continued the struggle with indomitable gallantry. His resources were so exhausted that he was obliged to pay his muleteers with clothes from his wardrobe. The civil war which had broken out in Castile prevented any assistance from his son Ferdinand; for after

the death of Henry IV. (January 1475) a powerful party, supported by Alphonso of Portugal, maintained the cause of the Princess Joan (La Bertrandeja) against her aunt Isabella. First Elne and then Perpignan,[8] after a long and obstinate defence, fell into the hands of the French, and the King of Aragon was compelled to ratify a truce, which left Lewis XI. in possession of Roussillon and Cerdagne.

The abandonment by Spain of the league against France and the Swiss declaration of war were not the only disappointments which befell Charles while besieging Neuss. The herald of René of Lorraine appeared in the Burgundian camp, and flung down at the duke's feet a blood-stained guantlet, the symbol of mortal defiance. René had been persuaded that he would enjoy greater consideration and liberty as the ally of France than as the dependent of Burgundy, and that Lewis might be willing and able to secure to him the inheritance of Provence, for which Charles was known to be negotiating with the King of Sicily. These, and other intrigues of his uncle with his enemies, gave Lewis a pretext for occupying Anjou and Bar. The inhabitants did not attempt any resistance, and the old king himself, in whom the loss of provinces and kingdoms could excite no new emotions, did not allow his philosophy, or his doting apathy, to be disturbed by the tidings, but continued the study of a partridge, which he was painting. It was not so easy to deal with the Duke of Brittany, whose Court continued the hotbed of all plots against the royal authority. It was to no purpose that

[8] The instructions of Lewis XI. to his officers are characteristic of the man and the time. All nobles who have fought against the French are to be exiled, and their property confiscated, notwithstanding all promises to the contrary. Tell the Cardinal of Albi, he says, to take the bishopric of Elne and to promise the bishop some equivalent, "Et puis qu'il n'en tienne rien."—Lenglet, V. iii., p. 381.

Lewis wrote to Lescun, now his faithful agent, that if the duke would trust him rather than his enemies, he should all his life long have no cause to repent of his resolution, but that he would no longer submit to be trifled with. He was not more successful in his attempts to divert Edward IV. from his projected invasion, although he received the herald who summoned him to surrender to the English king "his duchies of Normandy and Guienne" with courtesy, conversing with him frankly, and assuring him that it was in his master's own interest that he advised him not to invade France. He sent Edward a present of his noblest charger, magnificently caparisoned, and soon after a wolf, a boar, and an ass. By this enigmatical gift he may have meant to express the characters of the allies on whose support the English prince relied, —the cruel and faithless greed of St. Pol, the headlong and dangerous obstinacy of Charles, the sluggish perversity of Francis of Brittany. On July 25th, 1474, the treaty between England and Burgundy was signed. Charles engaged to do his utmost to assist Edward IV. in the recovery of "his kingdom of France;" in return he was to receive the duchy of Bar, the counties of Champagne, Réthel, Eu, and Guise, the towns on the Somme and other lordships, and was to be released from all homage and fealty to the Crown of France. All England was filled with the din and stir of warlike preparation.

Preparations of Edward IV. for the Invasion of France.—A new generation had forgotten the disastrous war in which the policy of Bedford and the experienced valour of the Suffolks and Talbots had vainly struggled to maintain an unequal contest. Or if it occurred, the recollection that the English had been driven from the Continent, and had lost the ancient possessions of their kings, did but inflame the national animosity and the

comfortable conviction of a just quarrel. The Parliament voted liberal supplies, the merchants freely advanced money, and the stoutest men of all classes eagerly volunteered for the expedition. The indolent but shrewd voluptuary, who had in great measure been forced into action by the national enthusiasm, understood better the difficulties of the undertaking, and the difference between the France of Charles VI. and that of Lewis XI., and probably looked from the first only for an opportunity of filling his treasury and of concluding an advantageous peace. Envoys were sent to concert plans of operation with the Duke of Burgundy. He advised the King of England to land in Normandy, where he would be supported by the Bretons, and where—but this reason was not given—the support of his army would not fall on his allies. The Burgundians, meantime, would advance on Paris from the north. "These are the keys of the cities of France," he said, as he showed his powerful artillery to the English envoys. His fool, Le Glorieux, was searching about on the ground—"What are you looking for?" asked Charles. "For the keys of Beauvais!"

Nor were the keys of Neuss to be found among them. A force of 15,000 or 20,000 men, which assembled under William de la Mark (the "Wild Boar of the Ardennes"), on the opposite—the right—bank of the Rhine could not prevent Charles from completing the investment. After the siege had lasted nearly ten months (May 1475), the vast host of the empire at length appeared, under the command of the brave Margrave Albert of Brandenburg, who took up his position on the left bank, not far from the Burgundians. The zeal of the Princes of Hesse and Baden, and of the other princes of the Rhineland and their allies, had collected an army of 80,000 men under the imperial standard. Lewis had promised the assist-

ance of 20,000 or 30,000 men; but seeing the German host so powerful, instead of sending an army, he proposed to the emperor a treaty for the partition of the Burgundian dominions. Frederic III., who, however wanting in kingly qualities, was not deficient in shrewdness and experience, replied by relating a fable which dwelt on the folly of dividing the spoils of the living bear.

Commencement of Hostilities between France and Burgundy.—The truce between France and Burgundy expired on the 1st of May. Lewis would gladly have renewed it; but this the duke refused. Edward IV. was ready to cross the Channel; he had twice sent Lord Scales to urge his brother-in-law to lead his army from the Rhine into Picardy, so as to co-operate with him in the invasion of France. When he found that hostilities were inevitable, the king began the war vigorously and cruelly, hoping to force his adversary to consent to a truce. Roie, Mondidier, and Corbie were sacked and burnt, Artois devastated as far as the gates of Arras; the garrison of that town defeated, with the loss of 1,500 men, and its governor, James of Luxemburg, the brother of the constable, captured.[1] Meantime the Swiss were devastating the Franche Comté, and the Duke of Lorraine had invaded Luxemburg; while the Count of Roussi, a son of St. Pol, with the forces of the duchy of Burgundy, had been completely routed at Château Chinon by the army of the Duke of Bourbon, who, after endeavouring to excuse his inaction by various pretexts, had been obliged to allow his troops to march under the command of a general appointed by the king.

[1] Jean de Troies says the king's army was so good and well-appointed, that nothing could have resisted it: that he might have conquered all Flanders, but that to prevent any decisive success, the constable and other traitors persuaded him that he must defend Normandy against the English.

Edward IV. Invades France.—By the end of May Edward IV. had assembled 1,500 men-at-arms and 14,000 archers, who were supplied with horses for the march and with sufficient attendants to pitch their camp and to see to their baggage, but unencumbered with pages or other non-combatants. This force crossed slowly, in flat-bottomed boats, supplied by the ports of Holland, from Dover to Calais. The traitor St. Pol, who had been more forward even than Charles in his efforts to encourage the English and in promising them support, had persuaded the king that they would land in Normandy. "Nothing can be imagined," says Commines, "more foolish and devoid of conduct than an English army when first landed, but in a very short time they become brave and skilful soldiers." They had, moreover, been long unpractised in continental warfare, and the short, irregular campaigns of the civil wars had been a very bad school both for men and officers. It was therefore most important that Charles should be with his allies at first, and conduct them step by step until they had gained some experience. This he seems to have recognised; for after a brilliant but undecisive action, he concluded a truce with the emperor. The question of Cologne was referred to the arbitration of the Pope, whose legate took possession of Neuss. The Germans gladly consented to this compromise; for the besieged were reduced to the last extremities of famine, and could scarcely have held out a fortnight longer. The marriage of Maximilian and of Mary of Burgundy was again discussed, and the emperor consented to abandon not only the Swiss and the league of the Upper Rhine, but even his kinsman Sigismund, to the resentment of the duke. Charles hastily broke up his camp on June 26. He had wasted eleven months, and was about to begin an offensive campaign with an

empty treasury, and an army so exhausted and disorganised, that he did not dare to show it to his English allies, and sent it to pillage Bar and Lorraine, instead of leading it into Picardy. Before he left England, Edward had sent Ireland, king-at-arms, to bear his defiance and to claim "his kingdom of France, which he was minded to recover, in order that he might restore their former liberty to Church, Nobles, and Commons, and rescue them from the grievous burdens and vexations with which his adversary Lewis oppressed them." Lewis received the English herald, a Norman by birth, with the greatest courtesy, and openly discussed the situation, pointing out that the constable and the Duke of Burgundy were but making a tool of his master, and that their fine promises were a delusion. He had better conclude a sure peace with an old enemy than trust these false friends. The herald received a present of 300 gold coins and thirty yards of fine velvet, and liberal promises if he would do what he could to promote peace. He confessed that he did not think that the heart of the king of England was in the war; but, he continued, the time was not yet come to do anything. It would be time enough when the English army had crossed the channel to send a herald to demand a safe conduct for envoys to treat of peace, and he must be told to address himself to the Lords Howard and Stanley for advice.

Edward was met at Calais (July 3d) by his sister, the Duchess Margaret; nine days later Charles himself arrived, not accompanied, as the English had been led to expect, by a mighty army to show them the road to Paris, but with a slender retinue, and a proposal that he should invade France from the frontiers of Lorraine, and meet his brother-in-law at Rheims, to assist at his coronation. Anxious, however, as he was to get away to force

the estates of Flanders to consent to new taxes and to conduct the war against René of Lorraine, he could not refuse to accompany the English a few days' march by Péronne, in the direction of St. Quentin; and he tried to satisfy their discontent by encouraging them to hope for the powerful assistance of the Count of St. Pol, the uncle of their queen; although he had just had fresh proof, if proof were needed, of the worthlessness of St. Pol's promises. The Constable was aware that he had offended both Lewis XI. and the Duke of Burgundy beyond hope of forgiveness; and he apparently thought that the more he embroiled the situation, the more numerous the elements of confusion, the more likely would he be to conduct his dark and tortuous but vacillating policy to a safe issue. He had treacherously seized St. Quentin, and he promised to open the gates of this important stronghold to the English; but when they presented themselves, without suspicion of danger or resistance, they were fired upon from the walls. The treachery of the Constable filled them with anger and suspicion, and not a little of the latter fell on Charles of Burgundy, who had led them to expect so different a reception. He at any rate cannot have been surprised, since three times already St. Pol had offered to surrender St. Quentin to him, and as often had at the last moment refused to admit his brother, James of Luxemburg, who was sent to take possession in the duke's name.

The season was advancing, and was unusually wet and tempestuous; the English were already murmuring at the hardships of the campaign and at the treachery of their allies. Of the two in whom they had placed most confidence, the one who had promised to join them with an army had indeed met them, but almost unattended; the other treated them as enemies. While their indignation

was at its height, the Duke of Burgundy suddenly left them. If the King of France had marched out to meet them with a fine army, they would have known what to do. But as it was, what plan of campaign were they to adopt? The country was strange, and had been laid waste by command of Lewis, in order that it might furnish no supplies to the invaders. They dared not advance without a single fortress in their possession, and with enemies or doubtful friends in their rear. This was the moment chosen by Lewis to open negotiations. So slender was the state which accompanied him, that he had no herald to send to the English camp. He ordered Commines to summon an attendant of one of his chamberlains, and to instruct him how to act the part. He had only once spoken to the man; but such was his insight into character, that he could not have chosen better for his purpose. A herald's tabard was improvised with the banner of a trumpeter.

Negotiations and Peace of Pecquigni.—When the disappointment and discouragement of the advisers of Edward IV. was at its height, the supposed herald presented himself before the English camp, and after asking as he had been instructed, for Lords Howard and Stanley, was introduced by them into the king's presence. He was commissioned, he said, to point out to his Highness how desirous the King of France had ever been to maintain peace and unity between the two realms. That the Duke of Burgundy, and others who had invited the English, had only done so for their own private ends to extort better terms from their sovereign, and that, provided they could satisfy their selfish ambition, they cared not in the least how their allies fared. His master knew that the King of England had been put to great expense, and that not a few of his subjects were in favour

of the war; but the bad season was already at hand, and it would be his care to propose such terms as might well satisfy both the English king and nation; he, therefore, asked that a safe conduct should be sent for his ambassadors, or some other way of conducting negotiations appointed. These overtures were not displeasing to the king, nor to the majority of his council; the herald was rewarded with a cup full of gold pieces, and it was arranged that the representatives of both nations should meet at a little village near Amiens. The English ambassadors first claimed the French crown, and then the duchy of Normandy and Guienne; but it was understood on both sides that this was a mere form. The French finally offered 75,000 crowns for the expenses of the war, a yearly pension, or tribute of 50,000, formally guaranteed by the Bank of the Medici, and the marriage of a daughter of Edward to the dauphin; instead of demanding a dowry, the King of France engaged to settle upon his daughter-in-law an income of 60,000 crowns, charged on the revenues of Guienne. A truce of seven years was to be concluded on these terms, and the two kings were to promise each other mutual assistance if driven from their kingdoms by rebel subjects, and that neither would conclude any secret treaty with the allies of the other. Other articles were added, which provided for the release of Queen Margaret in consideration of a ransom, to be paid by Lewis, of 50,000 crowns, for various facilities for trade between the two nations, and for the appointment of commissioners to determine a common standard for the currency of both realms. These terms were accepted by Edward, and were approved of by the majority of his council, who were weary of a tedious and inglorious expedition, or influenced by the gifts and pensions lavished by Lewis XI. He was willing to pay anything to get the

English out of the country; to secure this no sacrifice was too great, but he was determined that no consideration should induce him to cede an inch of territory. He at once exerted himself to borrow the large sums required, and he was able to do this the more easily, because he had always repaid his creditors with a sagacity or honesty then most rare among princes.

The Duke of Burgundy had hurried from Flanders upon the first report of the negotiations. As soon as he reached the English camp, he burst into the royal tent. Was it true, he asked Edward, that he had consented to treat with their common enemy The king calmly replied that it was true, and that he had concluded a peace for seven years, in which the duke might, if he pleased, be included. Charles upon this, in a passionate outburst, reproached his brother-in-law with having shamed his lineage and the brave deeds of his predecessors; as for himself, he wanted no truce, he had invited the English to join him in the war, not because he needed their assistance, but for their own good. All this and much more he said in English, in order that he might be understood by the bystanders. In private he spoke yet more contemptuously of Edward, declaring that his conduct proved the scandalous tale to be true, that he had no royal blood in his veins, and was but the bastard of one Blackburn, an archer. After this he returned almost immediately to complete his preparations for invading Lorraine.

The preliminaries of the peace were ratified, and it was agreed that the two kings should meet at Pecquigni on the Somme. A bridge and a barrier were constructed with all the precautions against treachery which past experience suggested. The meeting passed off with as much cordiality on both sides as could be shown through wooden bars as stout and close as a lion's cage (August 29, 1475).

The King of England paid great respect to Lewis, although in official documents he would give him no other style than "the most serene Prince Lewis of France," or "our dear adversary of France." Taking off his cap he had saluted him twice, bending his knee almost to the ground. The princes swore to observe the terms of the treaty, one hand on a missal the other on a fragment of the true cross. The fine person and kingly bearing of Edward made a favourable impression on the French; and Lewis expressed his entire satisfaction with what had passed at the interview, excepting only that Edward had peremptorily refused to abandon the Duke of Brittany, and had said that if he were attacked, he would cross the Channel once more to defend him; and also that when he had somewhat too lightly invited the King of England to visit him at Paris, he had appeared not indisposed to accept the invitation. "He is a very handsome king and fond of the women; he might find some mincing creature at Paris who would say so many pretty things to him as to tempt him to return." "His predecessors," he continued, "had been too much at Paris and in Normandy, and on this side of the sea he cared not for his company; on the other side he was willing enough to consider him his good-brother and friend." The English returned to Calais after some time spent at Amiens, where they were entertained with the most sumptuous hospitality, and no pains spared to keep them in good humour. Before leaving, Edward offered to give up the names of those French nobles who had plotted against their sovereign. Of these the Constable was most alarmed. He had vainly attempted to interfere in the negotiations: he now offered to Lewis to persuade the Duke of Burgandy to join him in falling upon the retreating English, and in his anger wrote to Edward that "he was a cowardly, dishonoured, and paltry king."

These insults provoked Edward to send the letters in which St. Pol had promised to assist the English to the King of France, who seems to have determined, whatever the cost, to punish the constable for his repeated treason.

Treaty between Lewis and Charles of Burgundy — Execution of St. Pol. — Charles, after angrily refusing to be included in the truce between France and England, consented to treat separately. His resources had been greatly weakened by the siege of Neuss. The States-General of Flanders had, notwithstanding his imperious threats, shown little alacrity in supplying him with either men or money, and he could scarcely hope to annex Lorraine if seriously opposed by Lewis. A peace for nine years was accordingly signed on the 13th of November. The king promised to abandon the alliance of the Emperor, of Cologne, and of Sigismund of Austria. If the Swiss attempted to prevent the Duke of Burgundy from reconquering Alsatia, or committed other acts of hostility, he might attack them without breaking the peace. The Duke of Lorraine was not mentioned, but the Duke of Burgundy was authorised to march his troops from the Netherlands to his southern possessions by whatever route he chose, provided that it was not through French territory, and therefore necessarily through that of Lorraine; and he might make war upon any ally of Lewis who had not adhered to the truce before January 1476. Charles, on the other hand, abandoned the King of Aragon, and swore[1] to do his best to seize the constable, and either to punish him as guilty of high treason, within eight days, or to surrender him before the expiration of four more to the king. In

[1] The oath sworn by Charles, and given by M. de Barante, vol. vii. p. 180, is a curious instance of an attempt to construct one strong enough to bind the conscience, even of a prince of the fifteenth century.

return he was guaranteed the undisturbed possession of the fiefs held of him by St. Pol, together with Ham, Bohain, and St. Quentin. These terms were alike dishonourable to both parties. Lewis abandoned the allies whom he had dragged into danger, and the Duke of Burgundy bartered for lands and profit the blood of St. Pol,—the friend and guide of his youth,—who had indeed deceived him, but who had sinned far less deeply against him than against the king, and who might have deserved to be pardoned for the services of his sons, one of whom was at the time a prisoner, and in danger of his life, owing to the zeal with which he had served Charles. When the treaty was signed, St. Pol was already in the power of the Burgundians. He had been terror stricken when he heard of the negotiations, expecting from the first that he would be sacrificed. He attempted to justify himself in a letter to the king. Lewis replied that he was occupied by many important matters, and desired his presence, for he greatly needed such a head as his. "I do not care about the body," he added, to those who were near him at the time, "provided I have the head." The constable needed no explanation of the sinister jest: his alarm increased. He did not dare to shut himself up in St. Quentin, or in Ham, which he had made one of the strongest castles in Europe. He wrote to ask the duke for a safe conduct, and, if we may believe Commines, a safe conduct was sent. He then retired to Mons, where the governor was his friend,[2] and endeavoured to propitiate Charles by the

[2] "Le duc Charles estant à Valenchiennes Monseigneur le Connestable se trouva devant le dict duc sur saulf conduict, environ *le troisième d'Aonst* et par trois jours parlementèrent ensemble."—Molinet, i. 147. This may have been the occasion on which the duke sent the safe-conduct mentioned by Commines. On the 26th St. Pol came to Mons, probably without a safe-conduct. In a pathetic letter, appealing to

surrender of St. Quentin. But directly the truce was signed (September 14), the king in person appeared before that town, and the garrison did not dare to refuse him admittance. Charles could not but dishonour himself, whether he saved the constable or surrendered him to the vengeance of the king, but he was determined to sell his dishonour as dearly as possible.[3] St. Pol was arrested, and imprisoned in the castle of Péronne. So eager was the king to get hold of the traitor, that although Charles did not deny or repudiate his engagements, additional concessions were offered to him. The Burgundians had entered Lorraine; Pont-à-Mousson and Epinal had surrendered. Nanci was besieged (October 24). But a powerful French army had been assembled, and only awaited orders to enter the duchy. The king offered the duke his choice between the possession of all the domains of the constable and that of the places he had conquered or might conquer in Lorraine. Charles upon this ordered his officers to surrender St. Pol to the French representatives on November 24, if they did not previously hear of the fall of Nanci. Campo Basso, in whom he placed most confidence, assured him that he would be master of Nanci before the 20th. If so, he meant to disregard his solemn oath, to refuse to surrender the constable, and to let the king do his worst. But Campo Basso betrayed his employer, and protracted the siege. St. Pol was in the custody of the Chancellor of Burgundy, and of the Lord of Humbercourt: the former was his personal enemy, the latter was eager to avenge an unforgotten insult. As early as was consistent with their instructions, they handed over the prisoner to

the duke's compassion, he does not mention any such claim on his protection, as he would almost certainly have done had it existed.

[3] Martin, Hist. de France, vii. p. 100.

the Admiral of France. A few hours later orders came from the duke for a further delay. But it was too late; the constable was already on the road to Paris, and in the clutches of a sovereign not likely to forego his dearly bought revenge. Charles might console himself with the good price he had obtained for the constable. He decided that it should be Lorraine; for the king had already surrendered St. Quentin, Ham, Bohain, and other places to him, and what he once held he meant to keep. St. Pol was conveyed to the Bastille, and tried before the parliament.[4] His guilt was notorious. Both the Duke of Burgundy and the King of England had sent letters written by his own hand containing abundant evidence of his treason. It was proved, and he did not attempt to deny the charge, that he had offered to procure the assassination or captivity of the king, yet he was greatly amazed when sentence was passed upon him, and he was told to prepare for death on the same day.[5] Times were strangely altered since the League of the Public Good, since the king's lawyers dared to condemn to a felon's death the Constable of France, a man of almost sovereign rank, connected with all the reigning houses of Europe, the brother-in-law of the queen, and the descendant of a family which had seen three of its members on the Imperial throne. No one could henceforward feel that he was above the reach of the law. For this

[4] He was tried before the parliament "en la grand'chambre la dicte cour, et toutes les chambres assemblées," and certain royal commissioners, the Admiral Bastard of Bourbon, the Governor of Paris, &c.—Lenglet, iii. 458. The king originally had wished him to be tried by a special commission. He was displeased that the constable was not tortured, and accused the chancellor of wishing to suppress awkward disclosures.

[5] Duquel dictum et sentence il se trouva fort perpleux, et non sans cause, car il ne cuidoit pas que le Roy ni sa justice le deussent faire mourir.—Jean de Troies, 310.

very reason, perhaps, the king was willing to pay so dearly for the privilege of cutting off his constable's head. "My brother of Burgundy and I," he said, "have divided the fox; he, like a wise man, has taken the skin, which is a good one, I the worthless carcase." But it was worth a great deal to have shown the greatest nobles that they could not with impunity persist in betraying and intriguing against him; and this was the more necessary, because he generally was so ready to forgive and to receive into his favour those who had heen his enemies. This salutary example might even enable him to pardon other offenders, since his leniency could no longer be attributed to weakness. To this, perhaps, the Duke of Alençon owed a third release from his well-deserved prison. The people generally exulted in the punishment of the constable. They regarded him as the author in no small measure of the wars and sufferings they had endured. His pride and cruelty were generally hated. He had been the worthy pupil of his uncle, the Count of Ligni, the betrayer of the Maid of Orleans, who, as a manly exercise, taught his nephew, when a boy of fourteen, to butcher unarmed prisoners.

Charles annexes Lorraine, and prepares to attack the Swiss.—Charles of Burgundy meantime had made a triumphant entrance into Nanci, and had treated the conquered inhabitants with unusual generosity. He had been captivated by the beauty of the "maiden" town, situated in a broad and fertile plain, watered by fair rivers, and placed midway between his scattered dominions. There, he declared, should be the future capital of his realm, there his supreme courts of justice should sit,[6] and there he would build himself a noble palace.

[6] He had already established a central court or "parliament," with supreme jurisdiction over the Netherlands, at Mechlin.

His army had begun the campaign in Lorraine, exhausted by its sufferings before Neuss. Now, at any rate, the soldiers expected a season of repose; and nothing but the fear inspired by the imperious severity of Charles repressed the murmurs of his officers when he announced his intention to march early in the year against the Swiss. February was not a favourable month for commencing a campaign among the valleys and the glaciers of the Alps; but Charles already saw himself, another Hannibal, descending from those snowy fastnesses upon the fair plain of Italy, where, indeed, he was not likely to meet with a Fabius. His Court was frequented by the envoys of Italian states, and he listened gladly to the suggestion of his Italian advisers. The Swiss, moreover, had given him such provocation that we cannot wonder if his fiery nature thirsted for immediate vengeance. Bern, early in November, after the victory of Héricourt, had summoned the Regent Yolande of Savoy to abandon the Burgundian alliance, and to surrender Morat, Yverdun, and another town, as security that she would declare war against Charles. In March (1475) the confederates again invaded Franche-Comté and sacked Pontarlier. In April the Bernese took various places in the Jura belonging to the house of Orange,—the vassals of Burgundy. In October some traders of Nuremberg were robbed in the Pays de Vaud on their way to Bern. This was made the pretext of a declaration of war against the Count of Romont, the lord of that district. Morat and other towns were taken, and great atrocities perpetrated. At the sack of Estavayer, when the headsman of Bern was tired of decapitating the prisoners, he was ordered to take those that remained out in boats and drown them. He allowed one of the victims to escape. The bystanders, enraged at his want of skill or ill-timed

mercy, fell upon him and slew him. Even Geneva was only saved by promising to pay a heavy ransom.[7] Such attacks on his subjects and allies could only, in the eyes of the duke, be atoned for by the complete submission of the perpetrators. It was idle for the King of France to counsel moderation; yet he earnestly pointed out the dangers and the little profit to be gained by attacking the Swiss, offering at the same time his mediation. He either gave this good advice because he knew that, coming from such a quarter, Charles would only be goaded by it into greater recklessness, or, perhaps, because he feared that the Swiss might not be able to resist the onslaught of the Burgundians, and was not himself disposed or able to help them. It is absurd to suppose that his motive was any tender solicitude for the welfare of his rival. He was at this very time concluding an offensive alliance against him with the emperor and the electors.

It is a mistake to suppose that Charles despised the enemies against whom he was marching.[9] He and his nobles may, indeed, have spoken scornfully of them, as boors and villeins, who aspired to domineer over their well-born neighbours, but that they were the bravest and

[7] In all these exploits the lead was taken by Bern, the other cantons either taking no part, or only sending their contingent unwillingly or under protest. The Bernese council knew that if they were attacked, the whole confederation would unite in defence of one of its members.

[8] At Andernach, December 1475, a few days before, the emperor had concluded an alliance with Charles, and had again obtained the promise of the hand of Mary of Burgundy for his son. Similarly, September 4, 1475, Lewis concluded a truce with Aragon, and four days later a treaty dividing the dominions of Castile and Aragon with Alphonso of Portugal. It is strange that it should have been thought worth while seriously to discuss the terms of such treaties.

[9] Mi a ditto, la S^ria. Soa che . . . contra li Svicceri non bisogna andare disproveduto.—Despatch of the envoy of GaleazzoSforza, quoted by Mr Kirk, iii. p. 248.

hardiest soldiers in Europe was notorious. Charles, the Rash was not likely to shrink from an enterprise because the chances were not all in his favour. The Swiss themselves began to have some misgivings. They were indignant that the King of France showed so little intention of supporting them that they offered to abandon his alliance, and to restore the places the Bernese had occupied. But nothing less then unconditional submission would satisfy the Duke of Burgundy. In the beginning of February (1476) Charles passed the Jura without opposition. His army consisted of 20,000 picked troops, well supplied with artillery and all other material of war. He carried with him his wonderful treasures of plate and jewellery, the like of which had never been seen in Europe, and which reminded men of the fabled wealth of Eastern emperors and caliphs. It is not improbable that, after chastising the Confederates, he meant to allow his ally, the Duchess of Savoy, to lead him into Italy. Perhaps the Pope would grant to the victorious hero, the fated leader of Christendom against the Turks, the crown which the Emperor had withheld. Such dreams were to be rudely scattered. The Swiss retired from the districts they had occupied: the garrison of Granson, who attempted to defend themselves, in the hope of detaining the duke till the allies came up, were compelled to surrender, and were hung, notwithstanding a promise that their lives should be spared.

Battle of Granson.—Two days later (March 2) the Swiss reached Granson, too late to save, but in good time to avenge their countrymen. The duke had just abandoned the excellent position he had at first chosen, and the armies met in a place ill-suited for the operations of the Burgundian cavalry and artillery. A retrograde movement ordered by the duke to draw the Swiss on to ground

more favourable for his troops, was mistaken for a retreat, the appearance of a body of mountaineers from an unexpected quarter spread a panic among their enemies, and the utmost exertions of Charles and his nobles could not prevent their men from flying in wild confusion from the field, "like smoke scattered by the north wind." There was hardly any loss of life. Only the Lord of Château Guyon, who leapt his charger over the spears of the Swiss phalanx, and all but seized the standard of Bern, was killed, with a few gentlemen of the ducal household. The army was saved by the promptitude and speed of its flight; but the treasures, the artillery, the camp of Charles, were in the hands of his enemies, and the fame of his arms, the terror of his name, were for ever lost. Precious stones, worth the revenues of a kingdom, were sold by the conquerors for a few florins. They marvelled at the velvet tents with their costly furniture, at the chapel with its images and reliquaries and chalices of gold and crystal encrusted with gems, at the seal, the sword and collar of state of the duke, and divided the contents of his military chest by hat-fulls.

Results of the Battle.—Lewis had come to Lyons to be near the scene of war. The news of Granson reached him on the day after the battle, and relieved him of many cares and misgivings. His gratitude for the favour he had received showed itself by a humble pilgrimage to the shrines which are built on the basaltic pinnacles of Le Puy in Velai. His joy was shown by various gallantries which he permitted himself, notwithstanding his age, among the fair Lyonese; if we may believe the chroniclers rather than Commines, who bears witness to his master's invariable fidelity to the queen after the death of their eldest son.

Before Granson King René, or his advisers, indignant

at the seizure of Anjou and Bar, which they had provoked by their treachery, were hurrying on negotiations to secure the inheritance of Provence to Charles of Burgundy, and a body of Lombard mercenaries were on their way to occupy or defend that county. Lewis, on the other hand, had referred the misdeeds of his uncle to the Parliament, and threatened to confiscate the territory he had already seized. Now that all hopes of support from Burgundy were at an end, René was brought to visit his nephew at Lyons. He swore on the cross of St. Laud to have no further dealings with the Burgundians, and recognised Lewis, as his heir after Charles, Count of Maine, a young man of weak character and feeble health. The king upon this restored the revenues of Bar and Anjou, and treated his uncle with much consideration, presenting him with jewels, manuscripts, and other curiosities, of which he was an eager collector.

The Duchess of Savoy and the Duke of Milan began again to negotiate with Lewis, who, however, showed no great alacrity to encourage their advances, and gave a friendly answer to the envoy sent by Charles to remind him with "humble and gracious words" of the truce between them.

Pertinacity of Charles I. and Battle of Morat.—The Duke of Burgundy was at Lausanne busily employed in again collecting an army. His allies and most prudent advisers vainly urged him to abandon a war in which defeat was probable, and would now prove disastrous not only to his schemes of future greatness, but even to the safety of his dominions. He had fallen sick[1] with grief and

[1] He was treated by an Italian physician, Angelo Catto, who afterwards served Louis XI., and was by him made Archbishop of Vienne. It is he who urged Commines to write his memoirs, and to whom they are dedicated. We may observe by the way, that that judicious

shame, and neither mind nor body could be at rest till he had met the injurious boors in battle, and healed his wounded honour by their overthrow. He concluded, however, an alliance with the emperor, and even allowed day and place to be named for the marriage of their children. Before the end of May he had collected a more numerous army than that which had fled at Granson. The Confederates had returned to their homes after their victory, and paid little heed to the warnings of the rulers of Bern, who were anxiously watching the preparations of Charles, knowing that they would be the first objects of his vengeance. Time enough, they said, to think of defending themselves when the territory of the League was actually invaded; and when Charles began to advance upon Bern, by way of Morat, which was held by a Bernese force under Adrian of Bubenberg, long the leader of the Burgundian party, it was uncertain whether the allies would give battle to protect a town which lay beyond the frontiers of the Confederation, and which was occupied without their consent. When the moment of action came, bolder and more generous counsels prevailed. The brave defence of Morat, and the certainty that if it fell the garrison would receive no mercy, excited universal sympathy. The towns of the "Lower League" and the nobles of Swabia disregarded the commands of the emperor, and hastened to the assistance of their allies. Duke René of Lorraine came from the Court of Lewis XI., where he had received little but vague assurances of sympathy and promises of future help, to fight at the head

writer appears to overcolour his account of the last year of the life of Charles. He would seem to wish to represent him as driven forward by a blind até. His fall is at one time regarded as the result of his overweening pride, such pride as in Greek tragedy provokes divine wrath, at another as a punishmen for delivering St. Pol to death.

of a few faithful adherents against the usurper of his inheritance. The siege of Morat began on the 11th of June. In ten days the Confederate forces were assembled. The men of Zurich arrived at Bern after a march of 100 miles performed in three days; hearing that a battle was imminent they hurried on without stopping to rest. Charles had neglected no precautions. His army was well organised and disciplined, and the position he had chosen was strong, although in some respects faulty and scarcely such as to enable him to make full use of his superior cavalry.[2] The infantry of the Swiss was more numerous[3] than his own, and far more formidable.

On the morning of the 22d of June the Burgundian forces were drawn up for several hours under a drenching rain in expectation of an attack. They had scarcely retired into their camp, believing that the enemy did not intend to give battle on that day, when the Swiss advanced with that steady impetuosity which was so irresistible. Yet the struggle was long and bloody and the event doubtful, till the flank of the duke's army was turned by a division of the enemy, which fell upon the rear of his position. The mass of the Burgundian army was swept from the field. Although the guards and the household of the duke, the Flemish and Burgundian nobles, and 3,000 English archers, under the command of the Duke of Somerset, fought with desperate valour, they could only increase the slaughter without retrieving the fortune of the day. The Count of Romont, who had been left with a force of 6,000 men—chiefly Savoyards

[2] A clear account of the battles of Granson and Morat, written with thorough knowledge of the ground, is given by Mr. Kirk, Charles the Bold, vol. iii.

[3] The Swiss army, according to Commines, consisted of 31,000 foot and 4,000 horse.

and Piedmontese—to protect the siege works, alone succeeded in retreating without any great loss. According to the most moderate estimate, two-thirds of the Burgundian army fell on the field or were massacred in the pursuit; several thousands rushed headlong into the lake, where they were drowned, or stood up to their necks in the water, while the Swiss marksmen showed their skill by picking them off one by one. A long summer's day and a sufficient force of cavalry enabled the Confederates to annihilate the army of the duke.

Fatal Perversity of the Duke of Burgundy.—Charles himself forced his way through the enemy at the head of 3,000 men, but they dispersed in the hope of reaching the passes of the Jura, and when he reached Morges, on the lake of Geneva, his escort had dwindled to twelve faithful attendants. Yolande of Savoy met him at Gex, but she refused to accompany his retreat into Franche Comté. After taking leave of her, he ordered his chamberlain, Oliver de la Marche,[4] to seize the duchess and her children, as he suspected that she intended to make her peace with the king. De la Marche obeyed unwillingly and awkwardly, for the young Duke Philibert was saved by the presence of mind of his governor. The duke thus incurred the odium, without reaping the advantage, of this act of unchivalrous treachery. For the Duchess of Savoy had so far been a faithful ally, and it was utterly unreasonable to expect her to leave her dominions at his bidding. He hastily summoned the Estates of his various dominions. He asked his subjects to vote him an aid amounting to one quarter of their

[4] He relates the exploit himself: "Ce que j'en fi, je fi pour sauver ma vie; car le duc, mon maistre, estoit tel, qu'il vouloit que l'on fist ce qu'il comandoit sur peine de perdre la teste," p. 559. As it was, he almost lost his head for letting the little duke escape.

goods, and a levy of 40,000 men. It was, however, to no purpose that he quoted Livy and the glorious example of the Romans after the fatal day of Cannæ, in his address to the Estates of Franche Comté, who met in his presence at Salins. They were not Romans, but neither was a Hannibal at their gates. The Swiss had dispersed after their victory, and were chiefly intent on obtaining the arrears of their subsidies from the King of France. The deputies however answered respectfully, and while refusing to grant the subsidies demanded, offered to raise and maintain 3,000 men for the defence of the frontiers. The Estates of the duchy, who were not overawed by the presence of the duke, protested against the continuation of a war which they considered mad and hopeless. The representatives of Flanders bluntly refused any farther assistance, although they professed their willingness to rescue their lord if he was surrounded and in danger of being captured by the Swiss and Germans. The duke, before he began the fatal campaign, had told them that he meant henceforth to manage his affairs without their advice, and to levy what taxes he pleased by his own sovereign authority. Charles had at first shown a feverish activity, and had been borne up by the groundless hope of being able to continue the struggle. But the apathy and disobedience of his subjects deprived him of this hope, and he retired to the castle of La Rivière near Pontarlier, where he spent two months in gloomy and savage despondency brooding over his disasters and trying to collect the wrecks of his army. Bad news reached him from all sides. Lewis on hearing of his sister's capture, had ordered the Governor of Dauphiny to occupy Savoy; more with the intention of guarding it against an invasion of the Swiss, or the protection of Galeazzo Sforza, than to overthrow the influence

of Burgundy which had fallen of itself. The Estates of the duchy were summoned by the French general, and commended themselves and the young duke to the protection of the king. The duchess escaped from the castle of Rouvres, where she was but carelessly guarded, and was kindly received by her brother, whose real affection for his sister readily forgave political infidelities which appealed to his intellectual sympathy.[5] He mediated between Savoy and the Confederates, and persuaded them to restore the districts they had occupied, with the exception of Morat and one or two other places. The embassy which they had sent to announce their victory to the king and to remind him of his promises was splendidly entertained, and presents were lavished on its members, especially on Bubenberg, who had been the consistent opponent of the French alliance. The king offered to attack Flanders, provided that all the forces of the cantons were sent at his expense into Lorraine to the assistance of René of Vaudemont. That young prince was already besieging Nanci, at the head of a small army of his subjects and of his Alsatian allies. The town was bravely defended by a garrison of Burgundians and of English archers till the captain of the latter was killed, when his men seeing no prospect of assistance from without, insisted that the town should be surrendered. At that very moment Charles was marching to their relief at the head of a few thousand men, the wrecks of his army and what new levies he had been able to raise in Franche Comté. If he had possessed some small part of his rival's presence of mind and fertility of resource in adversity, he might have saved Nanci,

[5] The only reproach he addressed to her was that implied in his greeting, "Soyez la bienvenue, Madame la Bourguignonne."

reoccupied Lorraine, re-established his authority in the Netherlands, and have secured an ally by the marriage of his daughter to Maximilian of Austria. His subjects, whose wealth and resources were far from being exhausted, would have readily assisted him in a defensive war, and it is probable that the cautious timidity of Lewis XI. would have shrunk once more from a direct conflict. But he had wasted precious time in listless despondency, and he was now too late to save Nanci. René, whose forces were not sufficient to offer battle, left a strong garrison in his capital, and promising to return within two months, hastened to Switzerland to obtain what aid he could from the Confederates. The Diet was unwilling to sanction a distant expedition and an offensive war, but they allowed René to enlist such volunteers as chose to join him, and of these there was no lack, when it was known that their pay was guaranteed by the King of France. In the beginning of the year (1477) the Duke of Lorraine entered his duchy at the head of 20,000 men. The two months during which the defenders of Nanci had promised to hold good, were long past, and they were reduced to great straits. The heads of the dogs, cats, and other unclean beasts, which they had eaten, were piled before the duke's palace, to be a memorial on his return of their endurance and loyalty. But the besiegers had suffered more severely from disease and from a winter of unusual severity. On Christmas eve 400 men were frost-bitten, many of whom lost their fingers and toes. When the approach of René was announced, there were scarce 2,000 men capable of bearing arms in the Burgundian camp. The obstinacy of Charles had been encouraged by the perfidious advice of Campo Basso, who had for some time been seeking an opportunity of betraying his benefactor. His persistent offers to bring about

his assassination had been rejected by Lewis,[6] who communicated them to the Duke of Burgundy; but Charles had refused to believe revelations from such a source, and imagined that the only object of the king was to lead him to suspect or dismiss a valuable servant. The Neapolitan now offered to join René, on condition of receiving the lordship of Commercy, which had, he said, been promised to him by John of Calabria as a reward for his services to the House of Anjou. He withdrew his men from the Burgundian camp, but the Swiss refused to receive the traitor as their companion in arms, and he took up a position where he could plunder the fugitives from the approaching battle.

Defeat, Death, and Character of Charles the Rash.—It was in vain that his most faithful nobles threw themselves at the feet of Charles, and begged him to avoid an engagement which could have but one termination. He refused to believe that the Germans would leave their stoves in mid-winter, or that his own forces were so reduced, and he accused his advisers of sympathising with his enemies. Yet as he prepared for the battle, after a last assault upon the town had failed, he seems himself to have despaired. As he was putting on his helmet, its crest, the golden lion of Flanders, fell to the ground. "This is a sign from God," he said, and refused to allow it to be replaced. He arranged his

[6] "Le roy eut la mauvaistié de cest homme en grant mépris," says Commines, l. v. ch. 6; but elsewhere he implies that the king rejected such proposals, because he thought they were a trap—such as had before been laid—to discredit him, "Il ne sçavoit point à quelle fin il faisoit les ouvertures." We shall hardly do Lewis great wrong if we suspect his scruples. A young man proposed to General M. Dumas to assassinate Barras. The offer was indignantly rejected, "Quelques années après Matthieu Dumas racontait son refus à Napoléon: 'Vous fûtes un imbécile' lui dit l'empereur, 'vous n'entendez rien aux revolutions,'" Lanfrey, Napoleon I., v. i. 309.

scanty troops in a strong position—their front protected by a brook which ran between a double hedge, their flanks covered by the river Meurthe and a wooded slope. But the enemy were numerous enough to press the attack on all sides at once. The valour of Charles, who on this his last day neglected no part of the duty of a general or of a soldier, could not long retard the event. He had been seen during the battle urging his great black charger wherever the danger was most pressing, but the manner of his death is uncertain. It was in vain that René of Lorraine, as he returned from the pursuit, long after the short winter day had closed, asked on all sides for tidings of his great enemy. Two days later the Count of Campo Basso came to claim the reward of his treason, and brought with him a young Roman of the noble house of the Colonna, who had served the Duke of Burgundy as page, and who said that he had seen his master fall. He pointed out the spot, and there a naked body was found gashed and mangled lying in the frozen mud of a brook. The head was split from mouth to ear, one cheek was gnawed by dogs or wolves, and the skin of the face was torn off as the corpse was broken out of the ice. Yet the physician and other attendants of the Duke of Burgundy recognised him by unmistakable marks. Some refused to believe that this dishonoured carrion was all that remained of the great and terrible prince who had played so large a part on the world's stage. Like Arthur and Barbarossa and Tell, it was told that he was resting in some deep cavern or mysterious forest glade, whence he would return to claim his own and confound his enemies. René of Vaudemont ordered every honour to be shown to the remains of his adversary. It was reverently laid in a mortuary chapel. "May God take your soul to himself,

fair cousin," he said, as he touched the frozen hand, "you wrought us much trouble and wrong."

Charles the Rash was but forty-three years old when he fell, and with him ended the male line of that younger branch of the house of Valois, which for four generations had reigned in the Low Countries with much splendour and prosperity, adding lordship to lordship till it threatened to overshadow and blight the stem from which it sprang. In his youth he had given promise of many good qualities. He was sober and chaste in an age of licence and excess; he had a taste for serious pursuits and great application; he was just, although severe, and if he expected much from others, neither did he spare himself; he was even capable of some self-restraint, for he could command himself in the presence of his father. But he had no spark of genius, although he eagerly desired and pursued ends which genius alone might have compassed. To have welded such heterogeneous dominions into a whole obedient to the impulse of their ruler, would have needed one of those master minds which inspire instinctive reverence and submission. None but a statesmen and a diplomatist of no ordinary tact and skill, capable of discerning and making use of the growing complexity, and of the discordant elements of European politics, could have founded upon the rivalry and mutual jealousy of his neighbours such a power as was dreamt of by Charles. Unfortunately he possessed none of these qualifications. Even his merits soon degenerated or were exaggerated into faults. His energy became passion and brutality; his justice became harshness and cruelty; his high sense of personal dignity produced a repellant and aggressive haughtiness of manner, which alienated sympathy and affection. His policy was violent and aggressive, yet at the same time unsteady and treacherous.

He thus made enemies even of those who were naturally disposed to be his allies.[7] He ruled over dominions which did not form a nation or even a state, and he was himself without nationality, neither French, nor Portuguese, nor English, and least of all Flemish, and he was at no pains to conceal his want of sympathy with his subjects.* He was a brave soldier and well acquainted with the details of military art; but he lacked the coolness, the ready intuition and presence of mind of a great general, yet he formed schemes of conquest which would have taxed the powers of a Cæsar or a Bonaparte. He believed that there was nothing which could not be effected by bravery and the command of a powerful army, and he neglected, more or less, all other means by which his pretensions might have been realised. He was misled and dazzled by the accidental pre-eminence over the princes of the west, which the wars between France and England and the subsequent civil troubles of those countries, which the divisions and the degradation of the empire, and the commercial prosperity of Flanders, had given to the dukes of Burgundy. An abler man and a wiser ruler would probably have failed in a struggle against circumstances so difficult, and against an enemy so wary and persevering as Lewis XI.; but the struggle might have been more equal, the fall less tragic.

The Policy Determined upon by Lewis XI. after the Death of Charles. — Lewis anxiously awaited at Plessis-lès-Tours tidings of the battle which was known to be imminent. News from the seat of war could reach him in two or three days by means of the

[7] "The Duke of Burgundy failed in establishing in a durable manner either of the two alliances (with England or with the French princes) which were the essential conditions of success for schemes even less enormous than those which he entertained," Van Praet. Historical Essays, Engl. tr. p. 85.

system of posts which he had introduced. That the Duke of Burgundy would not retreat, and that his defeat was inevitable, could not be doubted, and the courtiers were anxious to intercept the messenger and to secure the reward which the king was in the habit of bestowing upon those who first informed him of any welcome event. John de Daillon, Lord of le Lude, whose versatility and cynical cunning had recommended him to the favour of Lewis, was fortunate enough on this occasion to possess himself of the despatches, which announced the total dispersion of the army of Charles the Rash. His own fate was as yet unknown. The king was at little pains to dissemble his satisfaction. That same day he invited all his courtiers and captains to a banquet. Not one of them, says Commines, eat half his fill, and it was not the honour of dining in the royal presence, to which they were well accustomed, which took away their appetite. But there were few who were not conscious of secret practices or past rebellion; and now that by the death of his rival and enemy the power of their master was firmly established, they feared he would no longer be blind to their treachery. Even those who had not plotted against him were not without anxiety lest their pensions and places of profit should be taken from them, since their support was now not worth so high a price. But for the present Lewis was wholly occupied with the question how to turn the ruin of his adversary to the best advantage. When the defeat and death of Charles were only probable, he had already discussed with his most trusted advisers what course he should pursue. He had determined to occupy the portions of the Burgundian dominions to which he could lay claim, or which the feudal right of wardship entitled him to enter upon during the minority of the heiress, but in other respects

to respect the truce and the rights of his god-daughter, Mary of Burgundy. But he would insist that she should marry the dauphin, or, if the aversion of a girl of twenty to a husband only seven years old could not be overcome, some young French prince, perhaps the Count of Angoulême.[8] If she refused to accept the husband selected by her suzerain, the feudal law would afford a pretext for seizing the fiefs held of the Crown of France. This policy, although warmly supported by the judicious Commines, was open to serious objections. It was not probable that Mary would consent to marry the dauphin, but even if she were willing, the marriage would be the almost certain occasion of a war with England. Every motive, public and private, would combine to arouse Edward IV., the insult to his daughter, who already bore the title of dauphiness, the danger to the interests of England, if the vast possessions of the house of Burgundy were united to the Crown of France. Nor was it likely that the princes of Germany would tamely submit to see so large a portion of the empire annexed by a power whose aggressive character and great resources were already beginning to excite the apprehensions of far-sighted politicians. Not less resistance was to be apprehended from the turbulent subjects of the Duchess Mary; the hatred of the Burgundian and Walloon councillors of Charles, which was general among the Flemings, their old aversion to French rule, and their wish to see their princes dependent upon their goodwill, would ensure the strenuous opposition of the great Flemish towns to an arrangement which would make their countess the future Queen of France. It is true that these objections did not apply, or applied with less force, to the marriage of Mary with the Count of Angoulême or some other

[8] Charles of Orleans, the father of Francis I.

French prince. But what would this be but to create a new house of Burgundy, perhaps not less dangerous to the French monarchy than the former. Charles V. had thought to strengthen France by securing for his brother the hand of the heiress of Flanders; but the result of this marriage had been that Burgundy ceased to be French, while Flanders remained as before, the ally of England, and a constant source of disquietude and danger.

Another line of action had also been debated. This was to make no pretence of keeping the truce, and to take advantage to the utmost of the distress and weakness of the orphan princess. The neglect of the late duke to do homage, his "felony," and his disregard of his feudal duties, afforded sufficient pretexts to declare his fiefs forfeited. Hainault and Franche Comté were fiefs of the empire, and their invasion would be an act of unjustifiable aggression; but their inhabitants were not more averse to French rule than those of Lyons or Provence, or other "Welsh" speaking imperial provinces, and the German princes might be propitiated by a share in the spoil, by the cession of the duchies of Brabant, Guelders, Luxemburg, Holland, and other German lordships. Edward IV. would probably acquiesce.[9] Lewis had secured the support of both parties in his Council,—of the Lords Stanley, Hastings, and Howard, by bribes and pensions, which they feared to lose, of the queen's relations, by the brilliant match offered to her daughter. Nor would the Flemings exert themselves to prevent the

[9] Lewis afterwards proposed to Edward that he should assist in the partition of the Burgundian dominions, and take Flanders as his share. Edward refused. It would be difficult, he said, to hold the great Flemish towns, nor would his subjects readily consent to a war against the Flemings. He expressed his willingness, however, to receive a few towns in Picardy.

spoliation of their countess. They believed that the best guarantee of their liberties lay in the weakness of their prince. After the battle of Nanci, Lewis began more and more to incline towards this more violent policy. But he tried to disguise its most odious features by pretending that it was only as her guardian and as their protector that his troops occupied the dominions of his god-daughter and ward. Negotiations for her marriage were at the same time commenced, the aim of the king being to secure, as far as possible, the means of falling back, if desirable, on his first and less aggressive scheme. It is difficult to suggest, even after the event, a more judicious course than that which Lewis chose. But if it was to lead to a successful issue, it required—(1.) The most considerate and just government of the occupied provinces; (2.) A scrupulous performance of all engagements; (3.) A careful regard for the welfare and honour of the Burgundian nobles and ministers who could be induced to serve the interests of France; (4.) The nicest tact in all dealings with Mary, to prevent her from conceiving an irreconcilable aversion to the hypocritical power which robbed her of her inheritance, while professing to court her alliance. We shall see that the policy of the king failed in all these particulars.

The King Occupies the Burgundies.—Immediately on receiving the news of the defeat of Charles, Lewis XI. sent orders to the Lord of Craon[1] and to the Governor of Champagne to occupy the two Burgundies if the duke's death was certain, and to proclaim to the inhabitants the king's intention of marrying Mary of Burgundy, whose interests he should guard as his own, to the dauphin. Shortly afterwards he caused letters to

[1] George de la Trémoille, son of the notorious favourite of Charles VII.

be written to the towns of the duchy, which declared that, owing to the failure of the male line, it had reverted to the Crown. The council of Mary vainly pointed out that the original grant to Philip the Bold had been to him and his heirs, and that the enactments of the Parliament of Paris, which limited the descent of appanages to heirs male, could not be retrospective.[2] The king had gained the support of the Prince of Orange, the most powerful of the Burgundian nobility, and of the Bishop of Langres, who persuaded the inhabitants to submit quietly to the occupation of the duchy by the French. The representatives of the king swore to respect the privileges of the province, promised the abolition of all taxes imposed by the late duke, and recognised the sovereign jurisdiction of the Burgundian Courts. The county was subdued with equal facility; but it was difficult to find any decent pretext for its annexation: the convenient phrases of nationality and natural boundaries were not yet invented. The Swiss were ravaging the frontiers, and the king declared that he was only anxious to protect the possessions of his future daughter-in-law.

Policy of the King in the Low Countries.—He had meantime been scarcely less successful in the north. The towns on the Somme had always been French at heart, and Lewis had a just claim to their allegiance. His envoys, Commines and the Admiral of Bourbon, were joyfully welcomed at Abbeville and St. Quentin. The districts of Vermandois, Thierrache, Santerre, and Ponthieu submitted upon the approach of the king in person, and Commines succeeded in gaining the adhesion of

[2] Even if females were excluded, John, Count of Nevers and Rethel, was the descendant of Philip in the male line.

Philip de Crèvecœur, Lord of Querdes,[4] the Governor of Arras, who had been one of the most able and trusted officers of the Duke of Burgundy.

The agents of the French king were, at the same time, busily exciting the turbulent citizens of Ghent and of the other Flemish towns, to aggravate the difficulties of their countess, to refuse the payment of all taxes, and to extort the restoration of the privileges and liberties of which they had been deprived by Charles the Rash and his father. The most trusted and the most active of these French emissaries was one Oliver le Diable,[5] or, as he called himself, Le Daim, a surgeon-barber, who had received from the favour of the king a patent of nobility and the domain of Meulan. He was a native of Thielt, near Courtrai, and persuaded his master that his local knowledge would enable him to direct the popular movement at Ghent. Lewis was more disposed to believe the assurances of this low-born and impudent, although undoubtedly able, favourite, than the sober and less flattering advise of Commines, although he, too, was a Fleming by birth, and connected with most of the nobility of the province. At the moment when he would have been most useful, Commines was dismissed on a mission to Poitou and Brittany. He had been negotiating the submission of the towns of Hainault to the king with one of his relations, a man of great influence in that county. Lewis took the matter out of his hands, and entrusted it to his grasping and unscrupulous favourite, Le Lude, who at once asked how much the towns were prepared to give to secure his intercession; the gentlemen who had come thinking to receive and not to pay

[4] Spelt variously—Querdes, Esquerdes, and Cordès.

[5] His Flemish name was Necker, a water-sprite, mistranslated "Diable."

money, at once broke off the negotiation in disgust, and an opportunity not likely to occur again was lost.

Troubles in Flanders.—The Estates of Flanders had met at Ghent. Mary promised to be guided in everything by their advice, and to dismiss the "French" ministers of her father from the council. The most eminent and therefore the most obnoxious of these were Guy de Brimeu, Lord of Humbercourt, a Picard, and Hugonet, the Chancellor of Burgundy—men who had served Charles with equal fidelity and intelligence. Shortly before this an embassy had been sent to the King of France, consisting of almost all the great nobles remaining at the Burgundian Court; at its head were Humbercourt and the chancellor, who were the bearers of a letter to the king signed by Mary, in which she declared that they two, with her mother-in-law, Margaret of York, and her cousin, Adolphus of Cleves, alone possessed her full confidence, and that she should govern her dominions by their advice. The ambassadors offered to resign all that had been gained by the treaties of Arras, St. Maur, and Péronne, and to acknowledge the sovereign jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris over Flanders and Burgundy, and asked the king in return to accept the homage of their mistress and to observe the truce. He replied that it was his desire to obtain the hand of Mary for his son, and that in the meantime he should annex such domains of the house of Burgundy as had escheated to the Crown, and occupy the others as guardian and suzerain of the heiress. Finally, he requested the ambassadors to order that the city of Arras should be surrendered to him. He claimed it on the ground that it belonged not to the Count of Artois but to the bishop who held it of the Crown.[6] The

[6] The city of Arras was entirely separate and divided by fortifications from the town. The latter was the most important quarter.

chancellor and his colleague, who were anxious to propitiate the king at any cost, and who were themselves in favour of the French marriage, gave the authorisation required, and Philip de Crèvecœur, the governor, who had only been waiting for a decent pretext to carry out the bargain arranged by Commines, at once transferred his allegiance to the king. He did great service in persuading Hesdin and other places in Artois and Picardy to open their gates, and in conciliating the nobility. From Hesdin Lewis advanced in person to take possession of Boulogne, which he considered extremely important from its situation so near to Calais and England. The town surrendered after some show of resistance, and the piety and policy of the king led him to declare that he received it as a fief from the Virgin, to whom he publicly did homage, offering a golden heart of the weight of 2,000 crowns, and ordaining that all his successors should hold the county by similar tenure.[7] At length even the town of Arras, where the feeling against the French was strongest, was persuaded to swear fealty to the king; but only conditionally, as to the suzerain of its countess, until she should have done homage. The fair words of the king and the grant of various privileges could only secure a short and hollow submission. For the limits of the district where the inhabitants were favourable or indifferent to annexation to France were now passed, and Dammartin, who was sent to occupy Hainault, met with an obstinate resistance. A deputation of the Estates of Flanders and Brabant besought the king to desist from hostilities, and to appoint a day for the opening of nego-

[7] Boulogne had been occupied by Philip the Good in 1419, notwithstanding the far better rights of the family of La Tour d'Auvergne. Lewis recognised the justice of the claim of the Count of Auvergne, and gave him the county of Lauraguais as compensation.

tiations. They assured him that Mary of Burgundy was anxious for peace, and would in all things be guided by the advice of the Estates. The king replied that they were mistaken, that their princess only listened to a few intimate advisers, and affected to doubt whether the ambassadors had any authority to treat in her name. They vehemently protested until the king handed to them the letter he had received through Humbercourt and Hugonet, written partly in the hand of the duchess, partly in that of the Dowager Margaret, and in that of the Lord of Ravenstein. The king may not have foreseen the tragic consequence of this act, but he must have known that by humiliating and dishonouring Mary in the sight of her people, he would incur her bitter resentment, and that the two statesmen he betrayed were the only advocates of the French alliance in her council. He would probably at no time have greatly concerned himself about the delicacy of his action, but he would not have been blind to the political blunder he was committing, had not his head been turned by the easy successes he had recently achieved. His sagacity and tact were always more conspicuous in adversity than in prosperity. He had apparently given up all thought of conciliation and of marriage, thinking that he would be otherwise able to possess himself of the Burgundian dominions. The deputies at once hastened to expose the duplicity of their mistress. They upbraided her in the presence of her Court with writing letters, which showed the insincerity of her promises to the Estates. This she indignantly denied. The head of the embassy, the pensionary of Ghent, upon this produced the fatal letter, and handed it to her, "proving," says Commines, "that he was a bad man and of little honour, thus to shame this young lady, who ought not to have been so hardly dealt with, for if she had done

wrong it was unseemly that she should be punished in public." The duchess-dowager and the Lord of Ravenstein were compelled to leave Ghent. Hugonet and Humbercourt were seized the same evening; and when, a few days later, it was rumoured that they were about to escape, the people encamped in arms in the market-place, swearing not to separate till justice had been done on the traitors. They were accused of having betrayed Arras to the king, of having sold justice, and of having violated the privileges of the city of Ghent; but their real crime was their French nationality and their share in the despotic government of Charles the Rash. They were tried before an incompetent and partial tribunal, which was influenced by the suggestions of private malice, as well as by the louder threats of the mob. The Count of St. Pol sought to secure the death of the men whose enmity had delivered his father to the scaffold. The Duke of Cleves, whose son was a suitor for the hand of Mary, was glad that such influential advocates of the French marriage should be put out of the way, and the ambassadors of Liège, who had accompanied their bishop to beg for some alleviation of the punishment which still weighed on their unhappy city, urged that the willing agents of the tyrant deserved no mercy. Mary did her best to save the lives of her faithful servants. Her humanity and courage far outweigh the dishonour of a duplicity not unnatural in her position and excusable in her sex. Finding that she could not overcome the malignant timidity of the judges, she made her way, unprotected by any guard, to the market-place, and from the balcony of the town hall besought the people to spare her friends. Those who stood nearest were moved by her tears and her passionate prayers. They shouted that her will should be done; but those who were farther off persisted in clamouring for

the blood of their victims. Pikes were levelled on both sides, and a conflict seemed to be imminent; but those who had listened to the entreaties of their countess recognised their inferior strength, or the impulse of pity was weaker than that of hate; they yielded, and on the next day the prisoners were executed.

Mistakes of Lewis.—So far Lewis had been more successful than he had dared to hope. Never had a king of France, said his courtiers, been so prosperous or powerful since the days of Charles the Great.[8] The comparison was acceptable, and he hoped to emulate that monarch and saint, the object of his peculiar regard, not only by his frequent visits to all parts of his dominions, but perhaps also by the extent of his conquests. Yet the seeds of future disappointment had been sown. Mary of Burgundy was henceforward bitterly hostile to the author of her humiliation and of the death of her faithful ministers. The inhabitants of the Burgundies were alienated by the rapacity of the king's officers and by the excesses of his troops. He had endeavoured to secure the good behaviour of his soldiers by strict regulations for their payment and discipline, but his ordinances were ill observed. The Prince of Orange, to whose influence the king had owed the peaceable possession of the duchy, was indignant that not he, but the Lord of Craon had been appointed governor. The conquest of Hainault and French Flanders was delayed or prevented by the cruelty and bad faith of the royal generals. The towns of the Franche Comté drove out their French garrisons in

[8] Michelet, vi. 438. Kirk, Charles the Bold, v. iii. 433, note. "En la dicte année (1477) le roy ayant en singulière recommandation les saincts faits de St. Loys et St. Charlemaigne, ordonna que leurs images pieça mis en deux des pilliers de la grand salle du Palais Royal . . . fussent descendus . . . et posés au bout de la dicte grand salle."—Jean de Troies, 334,

obedience to a proclamation in which Frederic III. reminded them of their allegiance to the empire. They defeated Craon at Vesoul (March 19th). The Prince of Orange put himself at the head of the movement, and taking advantage of a popular rising, almost succeeded in throwing himself into Dijon. Only one town in the county, Grai, was still held by the French, and the insurgents had overrun a great part of the duchy. Much of their success was due to the assistance of numerous Swiss mercenaries, who had enlisted in the army of the Prince of Orange. The Confederates, although they had already concluded a peace with Burgundy, and cared not that the French should be their neighbour in Franche Comté, were anxious to preserve their neutrality. But the love of fighting and adventure, and a yet stronger lust for riches and plunder, had been aroused among the mountaineers by the glory and spoil of Granson and Morat, and by the liberal distribution of French gold, and the prohibitions of their magistrates were disregarded. The Diet, in the hope of appeasing a conflict in which they feared they might become involved, determined to offer their mediation. An embassy was sent, which was treated with little respect by Craon, and flattered and bribed, but not greatly regarded, by the king. Early in August Craon, who had driven his opponents into Franche Comté, began the siege of Dôle. After investing the place for three months, his camp was stormed by a sally of the garrison, his army routed, and his artillery captured. Two days before the Burgundians had surprised Grai, and their forces again appeared before the walls of Dijon. The king at length recalled Craon, whose success in war had not been such as to outweigh the injury done to the royal cause by his harsh and unpopular administration. His successor was Charles d'Amboise, Lord of Chaumont,

who had distinguished himself by his probity and humanity in the government of Champagne.

The resistance of the Netherlands daily became more obstinate; and Lewis, finding that his hopes of an easy conquest were disappointed, began again to incline to the now impossible alternative of marriage. His emissary, Oliver le Diable, had busily encouraged the disturbances at Ghent, which unfortunately took the form of violent demonstrations against the French. He now demanded an audience of the princess. "Does the king," she asked, "suppose that I am sick, that he sends me his surgeon?" The Count of Meulan, as Oliver called himself, presented his credentials to Mary in the presence of her council. His demand for a private audience was considered an intolerable impertinence; and he left Ghent in haste, among the jeers of the mob, who threatened to cool his pride by throwing him into the river.

The king had endeavoured to conciliate Arras by various concessions and privileges, yet his representative, the Cardinal of Bourbon, was driven out of the town, and an act, which appears to have been as treacherous as it was cruel, goaded the inhabitants into fierce revolt. The commandant of the garrison had granted safe-conducts to twenty-four of the townspeople who were sent as a deputation to the king at Hesdin, and who afterwards asked his leave to proceed to Ghent to learn the pleasure of Mary of Burgundy. "You are prudent men," said the king, "and may yourselves decide what to do." They considered this ambiguous answer an assent to their request. On the same day a large detachment, which was advancing to reinforce the defenders of Arras, was surprised and dispersed by the king's troops. Lewis, thinking perhaps that this attempt of the Burgundians showed that the citizens had determined to resist him to the

utmost, and that the visit of the envoys had been only meant to throw him off his guard, ordered his provost-marshal to follow them, bring them back, and execute them at once. One among them, a Frenchman by birth, had been appointed a councillor of the Parliament of Paris by the king; he directed his head to be fastened on a pole, and to be adorned with the red and ermine cap of a president of the royal court, and thus ornamented to be set to preside over the market-place of Hesdin.[9]

Revolt and Punishment of Arras.—Notwithstanding the success of the royal generals in preventing reinforcements from reaching Arras, the most zealous Burgundians of the neighbourhood had thrown themselves into the town. They insulted the French garrison of the city by hanging the white cross of France on gibbets which they erected on their walls. They defied the king by doggrel rhymes; he might hope to be lord of Arras when rats ate cats, and the sea was frozen at midsummer. These boasts, unfortunately, gave the measure of their hate rather than of their strength. The king led his army against the perverse town, and his artillery began to batter their walls. While he was watching the effect of his cannon, he was recognised by a marksman on the battlements, whose aim would have been fatal had not his matchlock been struck up as he fired by a companion who respected the sanctity of the sovereign's person. As it was, the king was wounded; "I owe this hurt," he said, "to the Duke of Brittany, who always calls me the

[9] This seems on the whole the true account of this affair. Jean de Troies gives another version—that current at the time among the French (p. 331). Lewis himself, in a letter quoted by M. de Barante (vi. 296), says: "ceux du dit Arras s'étaient assemblés vingt deux ou vingt trois pour aller en embassade devers Mademoiselle de Burgoyne. Ils ont été pris avec les instructions qu'ils portaient, et ont eut la tête tranchée, car ils m' avaient fait une fois serment." This agrees with J. de Troies.

coward king." The breach was soon practicable, and the inhabitants offered to capitulate rather than endure the horrors of an assault. Favourable terms were granted; but the amnesty which was promised was ill observed. The king caused many of the leading inhabitants to be executed, and among them the soldier who had wounded him. But the oppression of his captains was more irritating than his cruelty. The Lord of Le Lude, who was appointed Governor of Arras, boasted that he made 20,000 crowns and other profits out of the rebels. Constant conspiracies and seditions were the natural result of such treatment, and two years later Lewis was provoked to order the expulsion of the population, the destruction of the walls, and even of the name of Arras; henceforward it was to be called Franchise, and various inducements were held out to tempt settlers to occupy the deserted houses. Since few cared to leave their homes, and to establish themselves in a ruined town surrounded by hostile armies, the king ordered various cities, some even as far distant as Languedoc, to select, by lot or otherwise, a certain number of tradespeople and artizans, and to pay the expenses of their removal to "Franchise." He expected, by means worthy of an eastern despot, to secure a loyal and contented population.

The submission of the whole of Artois, except St. Omer, followed the capture of Arras. Oliver le Daim, after his expulsion from Ghent, in some measure justified his master's favour by the skill with which he persuaded Tournai to receive a French garrison, although it had bought, by a yearly payment, the privilege of neutrality. The inhabitants of Cambrai, an imperial town, partly intimidated and partly persuaded by the king's agents, "turned French," and substituted the royal lilies for the imperial eagle. Lewis gladly welcomed the adhesion of

a place so important by its position and strength, and promised the citizens great privileges; yet he did not care at the time to offend the Germans by the undisguised annexation of an imperial city. When a truce was afterwards concluded, he told the magistrates that he meant to maintain his jurisdiction as Viscount of Cambrai; but as for their bird, they had best put it up again some fine night, and if they were asked where it had been meantime, they might say it had gone for a holiday, and come back like the swallows in spring-tide.

The French forces were now united in Hainault. Bouchain and Le Quesnoi surrendered; Avesne was sacked, and its inhabitants put to the sword. During the siege of Bonchain Tannegui du Châtel, the faithful servant of Charles VII., was shot dead while the king was leaning on his shoulder. The progress of the royal army was slow, and embarrassed by the persistent hostility of the population. Lewis determined to intimidate where he had failed to conciliate; the villages were burnt, the trees cut down, and the growing crops systematically destroyed. Such barbarities only inflamed the hatred of the Flemings, and stimulated them to fresh exertions. The men of Ghent raised an army and placed at its head Adolphus of Guelders, whom they had released from his well-deserved prison. He was joined by the levies of Bruges, and advanced towards Tournai. But the old jealousy between Ghent and Bruges showed itself in quarrels and disorder. The Flemings were suddenly attacked by the garrison of Tournai and disgracefully routed, notwithstanding the bravery of the Duke of Guelders, who fell pierced by many wounds. The pursuit was continued as far as Courtrai, and the victors carried off the artillery and baggage of their opponents. The alarm was great in Flanders. Ghent and Bruges expected to see the

French at their gates. But even a bolder general than Lewis would have hesitated to undertake the siege of such powerful towns, with a hostile population and fortresses as important as Saint Omer, Lille, Douai, and Valenciennes, threatening his communications.

Marriage of Mary of Burgundy to Maximilian of Austria.—Mary of Burgundy rejoiced in her subjects' defeat; they had proposed to compel her to marry Adolphus of Guelders. He was, they said, a brave warrior and capable of leading them to battle in their own defence, while he would be unable to oppress them, since he would owe everything to them and be entirely dependent on their favour. But now alarmed at the successes of Lewis and his apparent intention not to rest till he had conquered Flanders, they began to think that it might be well for their countess to marry a prince whose alliance would strengthen her cause: and that she could not do better than fulfil the promise which her father had allowed her to repeat not long before his death to Maximilian of Austria, and which she had since acknowledged and ratified. Mary was herself of the same opinion. The Duke of Austria was personally as well as politically the the most eligible of her suitors. He had been described as comely and fair-haired, of gracious and lordly port; and although only eighteen, two years younger than his bride, he was manly and athletic. The Duke of Cleves, who had of late assumed the direction of Mary's council, had done his best to prevent the match, hoping to secure the great heiress for his son.[1] But the dowager, Margaret of York, who at first had pointed out how desirable it was that her step-daughter should choose a husband among the English, the natural allies of Flanders, approved of

[1] He was said to be a drunkard and of disreputable life. "He will break his glass on her head after dinner," said Lewis.

the Austrian marriage since she found that the suitor, whose claims were pressed by the English Court, was not her brother Clarence, but the upstart Rivers. Early in April an embassy had been sent by the emperor. The Duke of Cleves ordered it not to advance beyond Brussels; but encouraged by the Duchess Margaret, the envoys came to Ghent and demanded an audience. It was agreed that Mary should receive their credentials and refer them to her council for an answer. But when they presented a letter promising marriage, written in her own hand and sent to Maximilian with a diamond ring, and asked whether she had written the letter, she calmly replied, "I wrote the letter at the wish and by the command of my lord and father, and I acknowledge the contents." On the 21st of April she was solemnly betrothed to the Duke of Bavaria as proxy for Maximilian.

It was four months before the young prince could join his bride. He was delayed by the apathy and avarice of his father, "the most niggardly man in the world." He at length reached Colŏgne, escorted by about 800 lances, and by the dukes of Saxony and Bavaria, and the archbishop-electors of Mentz and Trier.[2] But it was only after receiving a sum of money for his expenses from his betrothed that Maximilian was able to enter Ghent, and the marriage, whose results were to influence the course of European history for many generations, was celebrated on August the 18th, 1477.

Truce—Execution of Nemours.—Maximilian, a boy of eighteen, unversed in affairs, and not even able to understand the language of the majority of his wife's sub-

[2] The aggressions of Lewis XI. upon the empire had excited great resentment among the German princes; hence the presence with Maximilian of the dukes of Saxony and Bavaria, the hereditary enemies of the house of Austria.—Michelet, vi. 448.

jects,[3] seemed scarcely a fit champion to enter the lists against so veteran a politician as Louis XI. Shortly after the marriage, he summoned the King of France to respect the dominions of his wife. A few days before his arrival at Ghent, the French had advanced to within four miles of that city, desolating the country with fire and sword; yet they were unable to extend their conquests in the Netherlands, and were losing ground in Burgundy. Lewis therefore agreed, early in September, to a precarious truce, which either party might terminate by giving four days' notice of his intention to resume hostilities. Paris had about this time (August 4) been the scene of an act of justice hardly less striking than the execution of St. Pol. Immediately after the defeat of Charles at Granson, the Lord of Beaujeu had by the king's orders besieged and captured the Duke of Nemours in his castle of Carlat, in Auvergne. James of Nemours,[4] Count of La Marche and Pardiac, had been the intimate friend of Lewis during his exile. He had been rewarded with immense estates, with the dignity of duke and peer of France. He had twice, during the war of the Public Weal, betrayed and deserted his benefactor. He had afterwards joined the Count of Armagnac, his cousin, in plots against the king, inviting the intervention of the English. When Armagnac was punished he was spared, but on condition that if he again offended, not only his new but his old crimes would be visited upon him. He bound himself by the most solemn imprecations, and again in 1475 began to conspire with St. Pol and other malcontents to depose and imprison, perhaps to assassinate, the king. Lewis, who had never exactly known how far that conspiracy had ex-

[3] He could, when they were first married, only speak with his wife through an interpreter.

[4] See above, p. 40.

tended, nor how many of his officers and nobles had been privy to it, was anxious above all that Nemours should be compelled to speak out, to make a full and explicit confession. For this reason he would not entrust his trial wholly to the Parliament, nor allow the Chancellor Doriole to conduct his examination. "If the chancellor," he said,[5] "had not feared that the constable would betray him and his master, the Count of Dammartin, he would not have caused him to be executed before he had been tortured. And it is for fear of displeasing that patron of his that he wishes the Parliament to try the Duke of Nemours." He ordered the prisoner not to be taken out of the cage in which he was confined on any pretext whatever, except for the purpose of being tortured. The cruel orders of the king were carried out; but it seems that the full confession of the wretched traitor was freely made, in the hope of once more obtaining pardon. It implicated almost all the princes of the blood, and great nobles, except Beaujeu; even Dammartin, as his master suspected, had known of the plot, and had at least not expressed his disapproval.[6] When the king found that nothing more was to be learnt, the Parliament, presided over by the Lord of Beaujeu, and assisted by assessors appointed by the king, were allowed to pronounce sentence. The crimes of Nemours were so plain

[5] In a letter given by Lenglet, v. iii. 490.

[6] But 1. It is difficult to see what Dammartin was to gain by joining a movement which was to make the Duke of Bourbon, his enemy, regent, and to overthrow the king, who had treated him with so much favour. 2. He continued all along to serve Lewis with the greatest zeal. 3. There is no evidence against him but the confession of Nemours, who only speaks on hearsay, and alleges nothing definite against him. "Interrogé qui le mouvoit de penser que ledit Dammartin en (sc. of the dauphin) deust avoir la garde; dit que c'estoit pource qu'il estoit bien vu de Mons. de Bourbon et de Mons. le Connestable." Now the hostility of Dammartin and St. Pol was even more notorious than that of Dammartin and the duke. Yet the king appears to have suspected Dammartin before Nemours' confession.

and palpable, that the most impartial tribunal must have pronounced him guilty. He was beheaded at Paris, August the 4th.[7] The king suspended those members of the Court who had not voted for the execution of Nemours, and he was indignant when the Parliament protested against such a violation of its independence. It was clear, he said, that they held his life cheap. An ordinance followed, which declared misprision of treason a capital offence.

Suspicious Fears of the King.—Such were the perfidy and ingratitude by which the king was surrounded, that a far nobler character than his might have been provoked to cruelty and suspicion. His low estimate of human nature and ignoble standard of religion and morality may, indeed, have saved him in some measure from the blighting disappointment which might have perverted and distorted a higher nature. Yet Lewis seems not to have been incapable of friendship and affection; he treated his friends with a generosity which was limited neither by their deserts nor by the dictates of prudent policy. He had sufficient human feeling to be embittered by the thankless conduct of those from whom he had a right to expect a very different return. The revelations of Nemours were not needed to open his eyes to the plots and treachery which were around him, but they came at a time when the fall of his most dangerous enemy had placed his authority beyond the reach of open attack. He knew that he was more feared, and therefore more hated.

[7] It has been said that the children of Nemours were placed under the scaffold. There is no mention of this in any contemporary writer, even in those most hostile to Lewis. Brantôme gives the story on the authority of his grandmother. But it is true that the son of Nemours was entrusted to the tender mercies of a Lombard favourite, who had received a share of his father's estates. We are not surprised to learn that the child died shortly afterwards.

His enemies, and all those who had known, yet concealed their knowledge of the plots against him, were aware that he had obtained proof of their guilt, at a time when circumstances made it easy for him to punish them. They might reasonably suppose that their safety lay in anticipating his justice. He could not forget that tyrannicide had been publicly justified by the University of Paris after the murder of the Duke of Orleans, and timidly condemned by the Council of Constance; while more recent instances had shown how exposed the lives of princes were to the dagger of a public or a private enemy. The vengeance of an injured husband and brother had struck down Galeazzo Sforza in the midst of his guards, and the Pope scarcely hesitated to avow himself an accomplice of the conspirators who assassinated Julian de' Medici in the Cathedral of Florence during the celebration of the holiest rite of the Catholic Church. The death of Charles of Burgundy was attributed by many to the hatred of Campo Basso, and to his fear of a master whom he had betrayed. Hardly any mental strain is more demoralising than the constant fear of assassination. It was aggravated in the case of Lewis XI. by rapidly failing health and a nervous excitability, irritated by various and tormenting ailments. It is not strange if, towards the end of his life, he became more cruel and vindictive; if he punished small offences with severity, and was careless of the affection of his subjects. His letters dwell on bloodshed with malevolent and unusual exultation, and abound with pitiless orders. "If you can catch him, burn the Prince of Orange alive," he writes to Craon, "or hang him first and burn him afterwards." Yet there is no evidence that he ever became the tyrant imagined by his enemies, that he wantonly and idly inflicted torments and death, and rejoiced in cruelty for its own sake.

Relations with Brittany and England.—Since he had not been able to seize the Burgundian provinces as easily or as quickly as he had hoped, Lewis was doubly anxious to prevent the intervention of any third power, and above all of England. A secretary of the Duke of Brittany, whom he had bribed, delivered into the king's hands the originals of despatches in which his master blamed the delays, and endeavoured to arouse the ambition of Edward IV. A truce with Maximilian had been concluded, and a powerful army could at any moment be poured into Brittany, which was not prepared to resist an invasion. Many of the Breton nobles had been gained by the king, or were patriotically averse to an English alliance. Deserted by his friends, and betrayed by his secretary, the Duke Francis swore on the true cross of St. Laud to be henceforth the faithful ally and subject of the king. Although the English people would have applauded a declaration of war against France, Edward only saw in the complications of the Continent an opportunity of obtaining more of the broad gold pieces which Lewis had just caused to be struck for the express purpose "of being given to great foreign lords and princes." His activity of mind and of body was impaired by self-indulgence and debauchery. A war would have compelled him to summon a Parliament and to abandon his plans for securing the despotic government he was labouring to establish. He suspected the fidelity of his brother Clarence,[8] and was distracted by the hostility of the Scotch. Nor was he uninfluenced by the advice of his ministers, who were loath to risk their French pensions. Even Hastings had at length been bought; his price was

[8] When Clarence was arrested, Edward is said to have asked Lewis what he should do with him. The only answer was a verse of Lucan, "Tolle moras, multis nocuit differre paratum."

high, and by refusing to give any receipt for what he received he excited the admiration of Lewis. "If your master would give me anything," he said to the French agent, "slip it quietly into my sleeve, but I will give no receipt to be displayed in your 'chambre des comptes,' nor shall it be said that the Lord Chamberlain of England is the pensioner of the King of France." So far indeed was Edward from attacking France, that he allowed the truce, which he had concluded for seven years, to be extended till the death of one of the parties. In this treaty the title of King of France is for the first time given to Lewis. The latter avoided all that might provoke a rupture. He paid Edward's pension with the greatest regularity, together with the sums which remained due for the ransom of Queen Margaret, and when it was complained that he had ruined the towns which had been settled on the Dowager-Duchess of Burgundy, he at once offered to make good her loss. A disputed succession paralysed the foreign policy of Spain. The apathy and difficulties of Frederic III. would not allow him to send any effectual assistance to his son.

Truce with Maximilian.—Lewis placed himself at the head of his army, and began the campaign in the Netherlands (1478) by the capture of Condé early in May. Maximilian, whose comeliness and gallant bearing had won a shortlived popularity among his new subjects, took the field against the invaders at the head of an army of more then 20,000 men. A decisive engagement was expected, when to the surprise of all, the king fell back and evacuated Condé, after it had been pillaged by his troops. He began to negotiate, and proposed to the duke and duchess that they should submit to the arbitration of the peers and other nobles of the realm. The Pope should be invited to send two legates, and the emperor and

electors might be represented, but the arbitrators must meet in France. These overtures were rejected, but Maximilian shortly afterwards assented to a truce. The news from Burgundy was more favourable to the French, and the Flemings were anxious to save their harvest from devastation. Nor did the king refuse considerable concessions; he withdrew his troops from Cambrai and from the places he had occupied in Hainault and Franche Comté. Frederic III. had strenuously protested against his violation of imperial territory, and he feared that slow and divided in action as the German princes were, they might at last be provoked to assist the archduke. He was determined not to fall into the error which had been so fatal to Charles of Burgundy at Neuss. His policy was to avoid all foreign complications. He was desirous to secure as large a part of the dominions of the house of Burgundy as he could, without involving himself in war with England or the empire; but his anxiety to establish the royal power firmly in France, to strengthen and centralise the administration, and to carry out such reforms as were consistent with despotism, did not allow him to indulge in vague dreams of territorial aggrandisement. Hence the favourable contrast which his policy in Italy presented to that of his successors.

Relations with Italy and Spain.—The Florentines were the devoted allies of France, and the Medici addressed the king in the style of vassals and servants. Francis Sforza had been his faithful friend, and after the well-merited death of the inhuman and perfidious Galeazzo, an Italian despot of the worst type, his widow, Bona of Savoy, had invoked the protection and guidance of her brother-in-law. Even the Venetians, although they regarded the prosperity of the Sforzas with suspicion, and were jealous of French interference in northern Italy, yet

saw in Lewis an ally against the pretensions of the Pope and the ambition of the King of Naples; while the latter prince was unwilling to provoke an adversary who might at any time revive the claims of the house of Anjou to the crown of Sicily.

So great was the influence of the French king, that he was able to interfere with weight in Italian politics without sending a soldier across the Alps. In 1478, after the failure of the conspiracy of the Pazzi, which the Vatican had abetted, and in which two nephews of Sixtus IV. had taken an active part, the Florentines, who had hung the Archbishop of Pisa, one of the conspirators, were laid under an interdict, and the Pope ordered his troops to invade the territory of the republic in conjunction with those of his confederate Ferdinand of Naples, while the Genoese were encouraged to throw off the yoke of Milan, the ally of Florence. The King of France, whose protection they had invoked, at once sent Philip de Commines to assure the Florentines of his sympathy, to help them by his advice and countenance, and to urge the Duchess of Milan and the Venetians not to be backward in assisting their allies. Lewis at the same time tried to alarm the Papal Court by his usual weapon. The law courts were instructed to enforce the provisions of the Pragmatic Sanction, and the king loudly expressed his painful concern at the abuses of the Church and the encroachments of the Vatican. He published an ordinance forbidding the transmission of money to Rome under any pretence whatever. The preamble, after relating with some details the sacrilegious outrage of the Pazzi, declared it to be a portentous and abominable thing "that the treasures and revenues of the Church, which are ordained for the service of God, the defence of the Catholic faith, and the relief of the poor, should be employed in support of such

murders and conspiracies and execrable crimes." The French clergy were summoned to meet at Orleans in September, and they declared that the abuses and distempers of the Church could only be healed by an universal council. After the Pope had been thus intimidated, a solemn embassy was despatched to Rome: its remonstrances were supported by the representatives of the emperor and of Edward IV., who allowed himself to be entirely guided in the matter by Lewis XI. Sixtus IV. was finally compelled to allow his quarrel with Florence to be referred to the arbitration of France and England, the allies and debtors of the republic. The King of France had thus, by his influence in Italy and his skilful diplomacy, protected Florence scarcely less effectually than he might have done by force of arms.[9]

He was not less successful in Spain. On the 9th of October 1478 a definite treaty was concluded with Ferdinand and Isabella. They promised in no way to encourage or support the enemies of the King of France, and he in return engaged not to countenance the pretensions of the Princess Joan or of her uncle and champion, Alphonso of Portugal. The King of Aragon, whose animosity and spirit neither age nor misfortune could blunt, refused to be included in the treaty. He died shortly afterwards (January 1479), and by his death the crowns of Castile and Aragon were united, and the foundation advanced of that great monarchy, whose influence was to be so dangerous to Europe, so deadly to the liberties and future progress of its subjects.

[9] During these negotiations the Genoese offered to place themselves under the immediate Government of France. Lewis did not choose to undertake the management of that turbulent republic. "Les Génois se donnent à moi, disait-il en riant à ses familiers, et moi je les donne au diable."—Martin. vii.[2] p. 141, note 2.

Preparations for the Campaign of 1479.—Notwithstanding the activity of his diplomacy, Lewis did not neglect preparations for the next campaign. The strongest towns in the Netherlands heard with dismay that cannon were being forged of immense size; that a gun tried at Paris had thrown a ball weighing 500lbs. from the Bastile to Charenton. But these unwieldy monsters could be fired only two or three times a day, and were almost as dangerous to the men who served them as to the enemy. Dammartin, whose fidelity the king had for some time suspected on slight or insufficient grounds, was superseded with many flattering assurances; but although he retained his pensions and offices, and was subsequently appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Paris and of the Isle of France, he expressed his sense of the injustice of the king's suspicions in a dignified and apparently straightforward letter. Ten companies of ordonance were at the same time disbanded, and several officers arrested. Those against whom nothing could be proved were liberated and their pensions restored, others were severely and cruelly, although not altogether unjustly, punished. The loss of Dammartin, and the disorganisation introduced into the army by the suspicions of the king, were soon felt.

Early in the spring the Burgundians broke the truce by seizing Cambrai, without regard to its neutrality as an imperial town, and invaded Vermandois. Lewis contented himself with checking their advance, and threw the bulk of his forces into Franche Comté. The Swiss had concluded a perpetual peace with Maximilian in January 1478; but the Burgundians gained nothing by this treaty. The Confederates did not intend to abandon their lucrative alliance with Lewis, who now repented of having somewhat neglected them in the flush of his first prosperity. The pensions to individuals and towns were regularly

paid, and the king affected to rank the freedom of the city of Bern among the most honourable of his distinctions. The Swiss mercenaries, who had joined the Prince of Orange in defiance of their government, were seduced by the prospect of higher and more certain pay, and deserted the standards of Maximilian, now that he was their country's ally, to enlist under the Lord of Chaumont, the French Governor of Burgundy. Dôle was besieged by a powerful French army, and was betrayed after a valiant defence by a body of Alsatian mercenaries. The inhabitants were massacred, and the town razed to the ground; only one house, that in which Chaumont had taken up his quarters, was spared. After the fall of its chief town, the rest of the county offered little resistance. The Lord of Château-Guyon, the uncle of the Prince of Orange, whose influence was scarcely less than that of his nephew, tendered his submission, and his example was followed by the majority of the nobility. The free imperial city of Besançon acknowledged the King of France as its protector, receiving a captain and a bailiff appointed by him, and paying half its taxes into the royal treasury; in return, free trade in all the fairs of the kingdom, with other privileges, were granted to the inhabitants, and the University of Dôle was transferred to Besançon. The submission of the Burgundies now appeared to be complete, and the king visited his new dominions in July, entered Dijon in state, and swore to respect the rights and privileges of the duchy.

Battle of Thérouenne.—While Lewis was busily regulating the administration of Burgundy he was disturbed by evil tidings from the Low Countries, where the vigilance and experience of Dammartin were missed, the army of his successor in command, Philip de Crèvecœur, was weakened to strengthen the forces which conquered

Franche Comté. An attempt to surprise Douai failed, and Maximilian, after collecting an army of 27,000 men at St. Omer, began to besiege Thérouenne. Esquerdes, with 1,800 lances (9,000 or 11,000 men) and 14,000 free archers well supplied with artillery, advanced to compel him to fight or raise the siege. When the duke and his captains heard that the enemy were at hand they at once prepared for battle. The heavy Flemish infantry, with their huge pikes and serried ranks were drawn up in line and led by Maximilian in person. Their divisions were separated by narrow intervals, through which 500 English archers and 3,000 Germans, who skirmished along their front, might retire when hard pressed. The cavalry, which consisted of between 800 and 900 lances, were drawn up on the wings, to prevent, as far as possible, the army from being outflanked by the more numerous cavalry of the French. Crèvecœur advanced with the pick of his lances on the left of the enemy, with the intention of turning their position. The cavalry of Maximilian threw themselves in his way, endeavouring to prevent a manœuvre which would have decided the event, for the unwieldy Flemish battalions would have been thrown into confusion by an attempt to change front in the presence of the enemy. The French men-at-arms, who were superior in discipline and almost twice as numerous as their opponents, soon drove them from the field. But instead of profiting by their success and supporting the attack of the archers on the enemy's infantry, they hurried away in disorderly pursuit. The bright armour and gay pennons of the flying squadrons had inspired them with the hope of securing distinguished prisoners and rich ransoms. Crèvecœur himself took part in this wild chase, which he ought to have done his utmost to prevent. He perhaps lost his self-control when he saw before him the nobles of the Low

Countries, who affected to consider him a traitor, and who were about to erase his scutcheon from among those of the knights of the Golden Fleece. The French infantry had meantime twice done their duty bravely, but they could make little impression on the Flemings, and were harassed by the arrows of the English and the musketry of the Germans. A sortie of the garrison of Thérouenne might have decided the day, had they not been content to plunder the duke's camp and to massacre the non-combatants, women and children, they found in it. The French infantry at length gave way, and were pursued and cut down in great numbers by the Flemings, who, in their turn, pillaged the camp of their enemy. When Crèvecœur and his men-at-arms returned, weary and in disorder from the pursuit, they found the battle already lost, and could only protect the retreat of their infantry. Maximilian, who had shown great personal bravery, remained in possession of the field of battle.[1] But although the French archers had suffered severely in the retreat, his own camp had been pillaged and his cavalry even more completely routed than the French infantry. The siege of Thérouenne was raised, and the militia of the Flemish towns dismissed till October, when the duke once more collected some 20,000 men, for the most part infantry, at Aire. He hoped again to provoke an engagement, but the French kept exclusively on the defensive, and after capturing some places of little importance he was obliged to disband his army. The king, who at first had not concealed his anger that Crèvecœur should have

[1] M. de Sismondi (Hist. des Français, XIV. 567) observes that during the reign of Lewis XI., which lasted twenty-two years, only two battles of importance were fought, Montl'héri and this of Thérouenne, and that both were fought against the king's wish, both indecisive and both useless to the victor.

given battle contrary to his instructions, and who feared that the full extent of the disaster had been concealed from him, afterwards professed to be satisfied with the result. But the opportunity of a brilliant victory had been lost through the eagerness of the men-at-arms to make profitable prisoners and of the infantry to plunder the baggage of the enemy. It was accordingly ordered that henceforward all the booty, including the prisoners, should be thrown into a common stock and sold by auction. The officers were reconciled to this arrangement by the assurance that they would be able to buy important prisoners at a low rate and to make a handsome profit out of their ransoms. Other more important changes were introduced into the organisation of the army. The feudal tenants had for some time been encouraged to buy exemption from military service, and the companies of ordonance more and more took the place of the unmanageable levies, whose ill-directed courage was often not less fatal to success than their insubordination. Lewis now aimed at substituting a formidable body of heavy-armed infantry, permanently mobilised—to use a modern phrase—for the free archers, whose discipline and equipment seemed not so well suited for the important part which infantry must henceforward play in battle. Instead of the archer which it had previously been obliged to furnish,[1] each parish was now called upon for a money payment. "The king," says Commines, "levied an excessive and dreadful tallage, thus inflicting a cruel wound, and one that will long bleed upon the country, and collected a terrible band of mercenaries, which he ordered after the fashion of the Italian despots." The Swiss Diet had again authorised the king (in 1478) to enlist their subjects, and had even undertaken to supply him with

[1] See above, p. 5.

6,000 men at a fixed rate. These formed the nucleus of the new force, which began to be organised early in 1480. By the spring of the following year the king reviewed a force of 20,000 infantry, 2,500 pioneers, and 1,500 lances, with all the carts and stores, huts and tents, that such an army required, in a camp which had been formed at Pont de l'Arche.

Difficulties of Maximilian.—There was full leisure to complete these preparations. Maximilian could undertake no offensive movement during the spring and summer of 1480. He was paralysed by his poverty. Ghent, when asked to contribute to the cost of the war, replied by strengthening its fortifications and imprisoning the duke's supporters. Lewis had placed an experienced sailor in command of his fleets, who succeeded in greatly damaging the trade of the Low Countries. The whole of the fleet which was returning to Holland from the herring fishery had been captured; a serious loss to that province, which supplied all Europe with salt fish. The old feud of the Hoeks and Kabeljaws (Hooks and Cods) was again filling Holland and Zealand with anarchy and bloodshed. Nimwegen and other towns in Guelders, after vainly demanding the liberation of the young children of their duke, had expelled the Burgundian garrisons, and concluded an alliance with the King of France. Yet, notwithstanding the embarrassment and distress of his opponents, Lewis was not disinclined to treat; he felt less confidence than ever in the result of the struggle. The growing discontent of the English might at any moment compel Edward IV. to interfere; his own life was precarious, and his attention was distracted by domestic politics. The Duke of Brittany, notwithstanding the solemn oath he had sworn, continued his intrigues with England. The King of France tried to neutralise

his treachery by securing the support of the great families of the duchy, the Rohans and Lavals, and at the same time bought the claims of the last representatives of the house of Blois; thus securing a weapon which, however blunted and antiquated, might still be formidable in powerful and unscrupulous hands.

Ambiguous Conduct of the Duke of Bourbon.—The Duke of Bourbon had been strengthening his castles and purchasing warlike stores. A train of mules bringing arms from Milan through Auvergne had been seized by the royal officers; the duke was accused, and apparently not without reason, of oppressing his subjects and of preventing them from appealing to the royal courts. A disgraced retainer of the duke was sent as governor to Auvergne to act as a check on his former master, and the Bishop of Coutances, his principal adviser, was brought to trial; the "grands Jours" of Auvergne, extraordinary assizes held to try offenders too stout to be dealt with in the ordinary course of law, were held at Clermont, to inquire into and punish encroachments on the royal prerogative. Bourbon had not concealed his disappointment at not receiving the sword of constable after the execution of St. Pol; and the revelations of Nemours and others showed that he had listened with complacency to the plots against the king, even if he had not actually been an accomplice. Yet it is probable that he was only preparing to assert himself, in the general confusion and struggle for power which might be expected to follow the king's death; for it was notorious that his health, which had never been strong, was now rapidly failing.[3] Commines remarks,

[3] In a letter to Maximilian, dated October 1480, Edward IV. advises him to conclude a truce, en attendant la mort dudict Roy Loys laquelle est apparente bref devoir arriver.—Lenglet, iii. 616.

that in 1480 he had noticed that the king was greatly aged, and early in 1481, while at Chinon, he was seized by a slight stroke of apoplexy, which for a time impaired both speech and memory.[4] And although he recovered his former activity of mind, and journeyed restlessly from place to place, the rich robes which he now wore, contrary to his former custom, could not conceal the ravages of disease.

Attempt to Induce Edward IV. to Attack Lewis XI.—Negotiations for Peace.—The disinclination of Edward IV. and his advisers to break with France or to interfere actively in Continental politics, domestic embarrassments and a Scotch war had enabled Lewis to carry on his schemes of conquest without any hindrance, or even very serious protest on the part of England. But it was doubtful how long the government would be able to resist the unmistakable wish of the nation. The London mob broke into and gutted the house of the French envoy, and public feeling ran so high, that Edward dared not punish an archer who had assaulted and killed one of his servants. Margaret of York herself had crossed into England, and promised, in the name of her stepdaughter, to indemnify her brother and his ministers for the loss of the rich pensions they enjoyed if Edward would declare war against France. They, however, distrusted these liberal promises of a government which had been obliged to dismiss 300 English archers because it could not pay them, and refused to renounce the French alliance. But in order to satisfy, in some degree, the wish of the nation and the prayers of his sister, Edward's youngest daughter was betrothed to Philip, the infant son of Maximilian and

[4] See the graphic account of the king's illness, in Commines, l. vi. ch. 6.

Mary, and the assistance of 1,500 archers was promised. The King of England even said, that if Lewis continued his aggressions in Artois, he would attack him; but the advisers of Maximilian felt that little reliance could be placed upon the unwilling and vague assurance of Edward, and concluded a truce for seven months, while Margaret was still negotiating in London (August 1480). Lewis XI. was anxious to conclude a definite peace. He was willing, if he so might secure what he already held, to abandon all hopes of further conquest. He feared a recurrence of his malady, and must have dreaded to aggravate the dangers of a regency by leaving the kingdom involved in war. The landing of the Turks in Apulia and the capture of Otranto (July 1480), had filled Italy, with alarm. Lewis took advantage of the anxiety which Sixtus IV. professed, to unite the Christian princes in a league against the infidels, by asking the Pope to send his nephew, the Cardinal Julian della Rovere (afterwards Pope Julius II.), as papal legate to mediate between him and the Duke and Duchess of Austria. He believed that he had already gained the Cardinal Julian. He showed him such honour,[5] and so loaded him with gifts and benefices, that Maximilian altogether distrusted his impartiality, and refused to receive him. The king could now accuse his adversary of refusing to listen to the admonitions of the holy father, and of delaying, by his obstinate animosity, the crusade against the common adversary of Christendom. Negotiations, however, continued, and Edward IV. lent his support to peaceful counsels; he even advised Maximilian to receive the

[5] Cardinal Balue and his accomplice, the Bishop of Verdun, were, at the intercession of the cardinal, released from their cages, and allowed to retire to Rome. Balue reappeared in France as papal legate after the death of Lewis

legate, and listened coldly to suggestions that it would be to his honour to invade France and to recover the provinces which had been torn from the English crown. He urged the duke to propose a truce for at least two years. If Lewis would not consent, he would send a contingent of 5,000 men into the Low Countries: a safe offer, since it was known that the King of France wished to conclude a peace if he could, and that if a peace was out of the question, he was willing to accept a long truce. The letters of Lewis to his representatives show how desirous he was that the negotiations should be conducted to a successful issue; they are, as usual, full of minute and circumstantial instructions, providing for every contingency, full of feverish eagerness and irritability, yet cautious and dispassionate in judgment, colloquial and vigorous in style. It is remarkable that he affects in these letters as great eagerness to procure certain harriers of a famous breed belonging to a Flemish gentleman as about more important matters. That a few couples should be sold to him is made the condition of the release of a favourite of the Duke of Austria, who had been taken prisoner at Therouenne. The motive was the same which made him hunt, notwithstanding his weakness, when English ambassadors were at his Court, the vain hope of hiding the precarious state of his health from his enemies. Notwithstanding the king's desire of peace, the truce was only prolonged for a year.[6] The basis proposed by Lewis, that the provinces granted as appanages to Philip the Bold and his heirs should revert to the Crown, while Mary and her children should retain the possessions which

[6] When the truce was prolonged, Lewis, with his usual far-sighted honesty in money matters, returned the money which the feudal tenants had paid instead of personal service, and the contributions of the towns towards the campaign.

the house of Burgundy had acquired by marriage or inheritance, was rejected by the representatives of Maximilian and his wife,

Anjou, Bar, and Provence Acquired.—Death, which seemed to have extended its hand over Lewis, helped him before its grasp closed upon him, to attain most of the objects for which he had so long struggled. Upon the death of King René, in the summer of 1480, the duchy of Anjou was reunited to the Crown on the ground that an appanage, according to the principle which the Parliament had laboured to establish, could only descend in the direct male line. The king at the same time occupied, notwithstanding the protests of René of Lorraine and his mother, Yolande of Vaudemont, the greater part of the duchy of Bar. His right to do so was based partly on the conveyance to him by Queen Margaret, after her release from her English prison, of all her rights to the domains of her father, partly on large claims against the house of Anjou, some of which arose from the dowry of Anne of Erance, which had not been repaid when Nicholas of Lorraine broke his engagement and joined the band of suitors for the hand of Mary of Burgundy. Provence was allowed to pass, according to the will of René, to his nephew Charles Count of le Maine, who was guided in his administration of the county, as in all other matters, by Palamedes de Forbin, the head of the great Provençal family of that name. Forbin had been completely gained by Lewis, who appreciated and rewarded his great and congenial ability. He was an astute diplomatist, a rigorous and able administrator, respected and highly popular among his countrymen. By his advice the new Count of Provence, and titular King of Sicily, discouraged the pretensions of the Duke of Lorraine to be considered his successor; and a day before his death (December 1481)

confirmed the will of King René appointing the king his heir, and naming as next in succession the dauphin, or whoever wore the crown of France. An attempt on the part of René and his supporters to assert his claim by arms was promptly suppressed by the activity of Forbin, who was appointed governor, with almost sovereign authority over the newly acquired province.[7] The acquisition of Provence, with its fertile plains, fine coast line, and extensive commerce, was a great gain to France. Marseilles had long rivalled the Italian ports in the activity and importance of its trade, and the frontiers of the kingdom were advanced from the Rhone to the Alps.[8] But the claims of the house of Anjou to Naples, which with his other possessions were bequeathed to the Crown by Charles of le Maine, were an insidious and fatal legacy.

Illness of the King—Death of Mary of Burgundy.—When the news of his cousin's death reached Lewis, he was slowly and imperfectly recovering from a second attack of apoplexy. He was struck speechless, and for more than two hours lay rather dead then alive. By degrees he recovered his speech and the full use of his faculties, but his utterance was impaired and his right side partially paralysed. Commines, who was with him at the time of his seizure, and at whose castle of Argenton he passed a month shortly afterwards, on returning from a mission to Savoy, found the king at Beaujeu, the domain of his son-in-law, but he was so weak and wasted, that he marvelled how he could still move from place to place. He was only borne up by his

[7] "You have made me count (of Provence), I will make you king," said Lewis jestingly. Hence the motto of the Forbins, "Regem ego comitem, me comes regem."

[8] Only Flanders, with the mouth of the Scheldt and Antwerp, would, says M. Martin. vii. 147, have been a more valuable acquisition.

untiring energy. Yet he was in high spirits, for he had good news to tell. Mary of Burgundy had died at Bruges (March 1482). She had been thrown from her horse while hawking, and it was said that her death was caused by the neglect of a wound which her modesty had concealed. The grief of her husband was sincere: many years afterwards, we are told, he could not mention her name without tears. Even the people of Ghent, who had treated her so harshly at the beginning of her reign, had been touched by her grace and gentleness; but they did not show their sorrow for her loss by any deference to her husband. The Estates of Flanders refused to entrust him with more than the nominal guardianship of his children. An attempt to coerce the Estates of Brabant by the cruel and impolitic execution of some of their members, only confirmed his unpopularity and their determination. Maximilian had speedily lost, long before his wife's death, the favour with which he had at first been received. Every disappointment or calamity was attributed to him. He was young and inexperienced. The wisest advisers and most skilful captains of Charles the Rash had come to terms with Lewis XI.; the avarice of the emperor grudged the slightest assistance to his son; and his new subjects, who had always been distinguished by their unruly and rebellious conduct, would only lay aside their jealousy and factions to unite in opposition to his wishes or commands. It is no great reproach to Maximilian that he should have failed in a position so difficult. He could not enforce his authority without money and without troops. Such support as he received from the nobility, and the scanty supplies of men obtained from Germany, were wholly insufficient to protect the frontiers of the Netherlands and to sustain a conflict which raged from the gates of Namur to the banks of the Yssel. Gueldesr

still fought for its independence and the rights of its young duke. Utrecht had risen in arms against a Burgundian bishop, and the unhappy principality of Liège was again the scene of crime and discord. William de la Mark, the "wild boar of the Ardennes," had for some time ruled the diocese, for the hatred of his subjects, who could not forget that he had been the tool of their oppressors, compelled the bishop to rely upon the support of this ruffian, whose policy was that of a tyrant at home and of a robber abroad. The assassination of a high official at length provoked the bishop to banish la Mark. He returned at the head of a band of cutthroats collected for the most part in France. He murdered the bishop, compelled the chapter to elect his son, and proclaimed himself the advocate or administrator of the diocese, while he wasted and plundered the neighbouring districts. The French meantime were resuming operations with overwhelming forces. Aire was taken, St. Omer again threatened, and Luxemburg invaded. The Estates of Flanders, of Brittany, and of the other provinces of the Netherlands, met at Alost and compelled Maximilian to give forty-eight deputies, chosen by them, full powers to treat and to conclude a peace with the representatives of the King of France.

Lewis Proposes the Betrothal of the Dauphin and of the little Daughter of Mary of Burgundy —Conclusion of Peace.—Immediately after the death of the Duchess Mary, Lewis had renewed his intrigues with the demagogues of Ghent; he dwelt upon the evils of war, the ruin of trade, the inability of Maximilian to protect his subjects, and he at the same time enlarged upon the advantages of a fair and lasting peace. He suggested that the means of securing such a peace lay in their hands, for Ghent had refused to surrender the custody and

guardianship of the orphan children of their countess, which the four members of Flanders claimed to exercise in turn, and by the marriage of the dauphin to the infant daughter of Maximilian, an acceptable and durable treaty might be cemented. These overtures were readily received by the Flemings, who were willing to secure the independence of Flanders at the expense of the Walloon provinces; and their ambassadors were authorised to accept the terms proposed by the French in the name of the duke, who vainly protested against the conditions thus imposed upon him. The treaty of peace was signed at Arras two days before Christmas 1482. It was stipulated that as soon as the ratifications had been exchanged, the future dauphiness should be entrusted to the care of the Lord of Beaujeu, or of some other prince of the blood selected by the king. Her dowry was to consist of the counties of Artois, Burgundy, Macon, and Auxerre, with the lordships of Salins, Bar-sur-Seine, and Noyers. If Margaret died without children by the dauphin, these dominions were to revert to the Duke Philip, her brother. The king abandoned his claim to French Flanders. The county of Artois, which had been so cruelly ravaged, was exempted from taxation for six years, the inhabitants of Arras were allowed to return to their homes, and St. Omer was to recognise no authority but that of its own magistrates till the marriage of Margaret of Austria and the dauphin had been solemnised. The king promised to restore the estates of the families of St. Pol (Luxemburg), Châlons, and Croï, and to refuse all support to the people of Utrecht and Guelders, to William de la Mark, and to the Duke of Cleves. The county of Flanders, although a fief of the French crown, was declared to be beyond the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris. After the treaty had been signed, the Flemish envoys

proceeded to Tours to obtain the ratification of the king. On no less important occasion would he have allowed strangers to see the state to which he had been reduced. Their audience was appointed at nightfall, and they were introduced into a gloomy room, in the darkest corner of which sat the king swathed in ermine and velvets. He regretted that his infirmity prevented him from rising, and after some conversation, asked for the Book of the Gospels, on which he swore to observe the treaty. His right arm was in a sling, and it was with difficulty that he could raise the book in his left hand, while he awkwardly touched it with his paralysed elbow.

Lewis XI. and the Dauphin.—Shortly afterwards the Lord and Lady of Beaujeu went to take charge of the little princess. After a splendid reception at Paris, she was solemnly affianced to the dauphin at Amboise. Shortly before (September 1482), the king feeling that his strength was failing, had visited his son at Amboise, and in the presence of his Court, had solemnly addressed to him words of grave warning and weighty advice: charging him, above all, to maintain the faithful captains and servants of the Crown in their posts, alleging as a warning his own example and the troubles which had arisen from his hasty dismissal of the men who had served his father so well. The dauphin swore that by God's help he would remember and follow this counsel. Lewis has been accused of indifference to the welfare and neglect of the education of his son. But there is little in his conduct to justify the reproach. We find in his letters the most careful directions about the treatment of the child. His health was extremely delicate, and if he has a cough, the king desires daily news of his progress, and blames his attendants for allowing him to go out in unsuitable weather. A silver statue of the boy of his

weight at the age of ten was offered by the king to our Lady of le Puy, in gratitude that he had been allowed to reach that age. This solicitude may have proceeded as much from political motives as from natural affection; but Lewis cannot justly be blamed for not exposing a young and sickly child to the fatigues and dangers of his wandering Court. Charles VIII. was but thirteen years old when he ascended the throne. It is generally acknowledged that during the last two years of his father's life, much care had been taken to fit him for his high position, and if even before that it is true that he could read the Commentaries of Cæsar, we must allow that his studies had been pursued as diligently as was consistent with his infirm health. The king even caused a manual of French history, containing moral, political, and military maxims, to be written for his edification; but unfortunately the lofty moral principles which it inculcated differed widely from the lessons of his own practice.

The Princes of the Blood.—Although Lewis XI. could not doubt that after his death the inevitable reaction against his despotic and revolutionary Government, and the succession of a minor, would in all probability encourage hopes and intrigues dangerous to public tranquility and to the precarious authority of a regency, yet in one particular at least the position of his heir was reassuring. Only one of the princes of the blood was formidable by position and character. The house of Burgundy no longer existed; René of Lorraine, the sole representative of the house of Anjou, inherited little of its power or of its persistent ambition. The Duke of Bourbon, who had never been remarkable for ability or energy, was sick and unlikely to live long; his brother and heir, Peter of Beaujeu, alone among the great nobles,

had always been faithful to the king in word and deed, and was governed in everything by his young wife, Anne of France, who had inherited much of her father's active and powerful intellect. The Count of le Perche, the son and heir of the Duke of Alençon, was a witless debauchee.[9] Among the princes of the blood, Lewis, Duke of Orleans, a young man of twenty-one, alone possessed the ambition which might lead him to conspire, and the ability which might enable him to be successful. He had been married by the king, while still a boy, to his daughter, Jane; but this match was not likely to influence his actions by motives of gratitude or affection.[1] Lewis, notwithstanding his experience of the futility of such engagements, sent for the young duke, and made him swear by God, by the holy sacrifice of the mass, by the gospels, upon his honour, and the damnation of his soul, to serve the dauphin loyally when he became king, to enter into no conspiracies against him, and above all, to conclude no secret treaty with the Duke of Brittany.[2] The great nobles and princes who had formed the league of

[9] He was imprisoned two years before the king's death, and treated with cruel and unnecessary severity. He appears to have been the victim of a plot on the part of Le Lude and other favourites of the king, who hoped to profit by the confiscation of his estates. He was terrified by reports of the king's displeasure into making arrangements for flight into Brittany. These arrangements were betrayed to Lewis, who was assured at the same time that the count had spoken threateningly of him, and had said that in the struggle which would follow his death, he should join the party of the Dukes of Orleans and Brittany. The king ordered him to be arrested, and entrusted his trial to Le Lude and other special commissioners, who endeavoured, by deceit and cruelty, to entrap or force the prisoner to some fatal admission. They would probably have succeeded had not Le Lude died, and the matter been referred to Beaujeu and a commission of the Parliament, who acquitted the accused of all graver charges. See Michelet, vi. 483.

[1] See above, p. 194.

[2] He also swore not to assist the Viscount of Narbonne (see below, p. 283). A similar oath was administered to the Count of Angoulême.

the Public Good had either been humbled or conciliated, the most formidable were no more: Francis of Brittany alone continued with restless and persistent, although timid hostility, to intrigue against the king, and to solicit the assistance of England. He had lately concluded a treaty with Edward IV. most threatening to the interests of the French monarchy. By it his daughter and heiress, Anne, was betrothed to the Prince of Wales. But Lewis had spared no pains to gain the nobility of the duchy. The Rohans and Lavals were devoted to his interests, and abominated the influence of a low-born favourite; while the mass of the population, though jealous of their independence, were hostile to the English alliance.

Opportune Death of Edward IV.—During the negotiations which preceded the treaty of Arras, Lewis had been careful to assure Edward IV. that notwithstanding any proposals he might make to gain time, and to deceive his enemies, he was firmly determined to adhere to his engagements, and to marry his son to the Lady Elizabeth of England, who had so long borne the title of dauphiness at her father's Court. Edward appears to have believed these protestations, he wished to be deceived, and the French king had made such sacrifices and had shown such eagerness to court his friendship, that it may have seemed unlikely that he would venture an affront so unpardonable, an insult sure to sting Edward into action, and to unite king and nation in determined hostility to France. When it could no longer be concealed from Edward IV. that he had been outwitted and duped, he burst into a paroxysm of rage. He could think and talk of nothing but the perfidy of Lewis, and the signal vengeance that should punish it; for this he appeared ready to abandon his pleasures and voluptuous ease, to sacrifice, if need be, his policy in order to secure the

enthusiastic support of the nation and the liberal votes of his Parliament. But in the midst of his threats and anger he fell ill, his constitution was impaired by excesses of every kind, and a sickness at first trifling terminated fatally (April 1483). The troubles and the crimes which followed the death of Edward freed Lewis from the most serious danger which still threatened his triumphant policy.

Relations of Lewis with Foreign Powers.—The strength of Spain was united under the sceptre of an able, unscrupulous, and ambitious prince. But Ferdinand was more anxious to deprive the Moors of the fairest and last of their European possessions than to embark in a doubtful and dangerous struggle for the recovery of Roussillon. He did not even attempt to meddle with the disputed succession of Navarre, where, as in Savoy, Lewis had taken advantage of the minority of the reigning prince to exercise almost sovereign authority. Gaston Phœbus, the son of Madeline of France, had succeeded his grandmother, Eleanore, Countess of Foix (in 1479). He died when only fifteen years old, in 1482; it was supposed that he had been poisoned by Ferdinand the Catholic to prevent the possibility of his marriage with Joan of Castile. His uncle, the Viscount of Narbonne, was the rightful heir to the throne of Navarre, but he was the brother-in-law of the Duke of Orleans and the friend of the Duke of Brittany. Lewis therefore supported the claim of his niece Catherine, the sister of the late king, under whose name and that of her mother, the regent, he could himself govern Navarre, His support was decisive, for Ferdinand of Aragon only interfered to ask the hand of the young queen for his son John.

The frontier of the Alps was not less well secured. The regent Yolande of Savoy, died shortly after her release from captivity, and her death was followed by that of her young son Philibert at Lyons, where he was living under

the tutelage of Lewis XI. in 1482. He was succeeded by his brother Charles; and although the duchy was disturbed by the ambition and the mutual jealousy of the uncles of the young princes, the Counts of Romont and Bresse and the Bishop of Geneva, the authority of the King of France was paramount, and his interference decisive.

In Italy the Pope, who was threatened by Ferdinand of Naples, courted the favour of the King of France, and Lewis interfered to protect the children of his sister-in-law, Bona of Savoy, against the unscrupulous ambition of their uncle, Ludovic the Moor. But Italy has never been dangerous to her neighbours except when her divisions and apparent weakness has tempted them to venture among the shifting sands of her politics. Like a fair and treacherous siren, she invited the approach of the stranger only to ensure his ruin and dishonour. Lewis XI. had ever shown himself too cool and unromantic to be allured by such wiles. It is not therefore, surprising, that now when he was only anxious to leave a kingdom at peace to his successor, he did not regard the suggestions of Sixtus IV. that his just claims to the throne of Naples would be ratified by the enthusiastic assent of Italy.

Even the northern provinces of the kingdom might at length look forward to some respite from the sufferings of almost continuous warfare. René of Lorraine, after the failure of his attempts to prevent the annexation of Provence, had been reconciled with the king, while the exhaustion of the Low Countries and the unpopularity and powerlessness of Maximilian were the best guarantees of the peace of Arras.

Uncompleted Schemes of the King.—But although no foreign enemies threatened the peaceful succession of his son, Lewis could not resign himself to die. Nor need we wholly impute the eagerness with

which he clung to life to an ignoble fear of death. He had consolidated the kingdom, and enlarged its boundaries; he had crushed the factious opposition of the nobles and of the princes of the blood, and had established the royal power on a secure basis. But the great and arduous struggle in which he had been engaged had left him little time, and had deprived him of the means to carry out the numerous plans of domestic and administrative reform which he had cherished. "If God had granted him the grace," says Commines, "of living five or six years more without being too much weighed down by sickness, he would greatly have benefited his realm." He was especially anxious to reform the wearisome delays and expense of the law courts, to reduce into harmony and to codify the customs and laws of the various provinces, and thus to check the frauds and exactions of the lawyers, which, we are told, were greater in France than in any other country. He also desired to facilitate commerce, by introducing a uniform system of weights, coinage, and measures throughout the country, and to alleviate the intolerable burden of taxation.

Arbitrary taxation and a standing army, the necessary and sure foundations of despotism, had, as we have seen, been established by the patriotic advisers of Charles VII., and it was not because their existence was incompatible with public liberty that they excited the murmurs of the subjects of Lewis XI. Here and there a statesman like Commines might protest against a pernicious and unconstitutional extension of the royal prerogative; but the nation only objected to the taxes because they were oppressive, and to the companies of ordonance because they were insolent and licentious. Lewis had increased the regular force of cavalry from 1,700 lances to between 4,000 and 5,000, and he had replaced the free archers by

25,000 mercenaries, in great part foreigners, Swiss, Germans, Italians, and Scotch, whose fantastic costumes, barbarous language, and rough manners alarmed and disgusted the French. The constant movement of troops which his policy and his suspicions necessitated, was the cause of many disorders and of much oppression of peaceable citizens. In the mistaken hope of improving the efficiency of their discipline, the king exempted the soldiers from the control of the ordinary magistrates, and placed them under the more summary jurisdiction of their provost-marshal, a measure which often ensured the impunity it was intended to prevent.

Great Expenditure.—An increased military force necessitated increased taxation. At the end of the reign of Lewis XI., the public revenue amounted to 4,700,000 francs,[3] more than twice what it had been at his accession. Large as this sum is,—it appeared immense and "horrible" to contemporaries,—only the most careful management can have defrayed from it the lavish expenditure of the king; and it must be remembered to the credit, if not of his honour, at least of his sagacity, that he was always punctual in the payment of his debts, and never had recourse to the dishonourable and ruinous financial expedients of his predecessors. Although sparing and almost niggardly in his personal expenditure, he poured forth his treasures like water when an object was to be gained by so doing. He gave liberally, not so much

[3] This would not, however, include the proceeds of the royal domain; and of those sources of revenue permanently attached to the royal office, regaliar, and other rights. The Parliament continually protested against the diminution of the royal domain by the lavish grants of the king. The domain, said the lawyers, was like the mystic coat of our Lord, indivisible, and the Courts would only register the deeds alienating it under protest. Taking into consideration the relative values of other articles, we may roughly estimate the French *livre*, at the end of the 15th century, to be the equivalent of about 20 francs of modern money.

in the hope of buying men's gratitude, he had abundant proof how worthless a ware that was, but to whet their appetite for more, and as an earnest of the rich reward awaiting future service. All foreign courts were filled with his pensioners; he preferred to meet his enemies in a contest of corruption and intrigue, rather than on the battlefield. Perhaps in some small measure from a genuine dislike for bloodshed, his enemies reported as an instance of his unkingly spirit a saying, that he would rather loose 10,000 crowns than the life of a single archer, but far more because in a struggle of diplomacy and craft he relied upon himself, upon the sagacity and subtlety which he perhaps overrated, while in war everything might turn upon the fidelity of others whom he had every reason to mistrust. But while bribing and spending, as if his purse was his only resource, he maintained the most costly armaments that Europe had as yet seen. Nor was he penurious in other matters. He was a not illiberal patron of science and of art, and the sums which he spent in donations to religious bodies and in costly offerings at the shrines of the saints he delighted to honour, exceeded the measure alike of his resources and of sober religion.[4]

Unpopularity of the Government. — It is not strange that the Government of Lewis XI. should have been unpopular. His successes, great as they were, had not been of a nature to kindle the enthusiasm of the multitude, while the sacrifices they had entailed were felt by all. The burst of patriotism, the sense of national unity which had been produced or stimulated by the English wars had grown languid; and it must not be

[4] Towards the end of his reign a scarcity of bullion was caused by the profusion of his *ex votos*; and partly in consequence of this glass and other ware began to take the place of plate on the tables of the wealthy.

forgotten, that by avoiding to summon the States-General, and by encouraging not only provincial at the expense of national institutions, but also, not unfrequently municipal institutions at the expense of provincial, Lewis, in his anxiety only to deal with bodies incapable of resisting the authority of the Crown, fostered the political short-sightedness which was insensible to the wider triumphs of his policy. He had saved his people from anarchy and civil war, and from feudal oppression, but in the contemplation of present suffering, they forgot that it was the alternative of greater evils. The last two years of his reign were years of scarcity, amounting to famine in 1482. Not only the cereals but the vines, and all other fruit trees, failed, the country was devastated by floods, and as was usual, pestilence followed close upon the heels of famine. These natural calamities must have rendered the weight of taxation far more oppressive, and have neutralised the efforts of the king to promote his subjects' prosperity, even if they were not directly imputed by ignorance and malice to the errors and crimes of his Government.

Lewis at Plessis.—Lewis spent the last year of his life in suspicious seclusion, at his favourite abode of Plessis-lès-Tours. He endeavoured to conceal his growing weakness, conceiving that it would encourage his enemies. On this account, not less than because since the assassination of the Duke of Milan, and the attempt of the Pazzi, he had been nervously anxious about his personal safety,[5]

[5] "Depuis l'assassinat du Duc de Milan, et la conjuration de Florence le roi s'occupait de sa propre sureté, avec *cet esprit sans repos et imaginatif* qu'il avait toujours porté en toutes choses."—M. de Barante. Cf. Commines, l. vi. chap. 11. "Quelques cinq ou six mois paravent (*i.e.*, before his death) ledict seigneur avoit suspection de tout homme et especiallement de tous ceulx qui estoient dignes d'avoir authorité."

but few visitors were admitted into the castle. Even the court and the officers of the household were for the most part lodged at Tours. Night and day archers kept watch and ward on the battlements and in the ditches, and the walls bristled with iron spikes, although they might well have been deemed unapproachable from the pitfalls and calthrops which surrounded them. As the end drew near, the king's terrors increased. Even the proved fidelity of Peter of Beaujeu was suspected. As he entered the courtyard of Plessis with a larger retinue than was usual, the king whispered to an archer to engage his followers in conversation, and to feel furtively whether they wore corslets concealed beneath their clothes. The cages,[6] says Commines, in which he confined his prisoners were narrow; but the gloomy castle to which his fears confined him was scarcely a wider prison for so mighty a monarch. The only men in whom he felt confidence were those who depended solely on his favour, whom he knew to be hated and despised, and who had everything to fear when his protection was withdrawn. His physician, one Coictier, treated him with rough brutality. "I know," he said, "that some day you will send me away,[7] as you have sent others; but if you

[6] These cages were, after all, nothing like so bad as the dungeons in which prisoners were often confined during the Middle Ages, and, indeed, much later. They seem usually to have been placed in a large room. Mlle. Dupont gives in her notes (vol. ii. p. 269) the bill for making the cage in which the Bishop of Verdun was imprisoned:—"Une grande cage de bois . . . contenant neuf pieds de long sur huit pieds de lé, et de hauteur sept pied." The floor of the room in which it was placed had to be strengthened because of its great weight. Among the items we find, "à un menuisier la somme de vingt livres deux sols Parisis, pour portes, fenestres, couches, selle percée, et autres choses; plus quarante huit sols six deniers à un vitrier pour les vitres de la dicte chambre."

[7] This is very generally misquoted:—"You will send me *there*, *where* you, &c.;" a sinister suggestion not found in the original authorities.

do, I swear you will not have eight days to live." He wrung upwards of 50,000 crowns from the fears of his master during the last five months of his life, besides places and pensions for himself and his relations. But Lewis trusted not less to heavenly than to earthly remedies. Relics were collected from all quarters; the complaisance of the Pope went so far, that a tumult of the Roman people protested against a liberality which seemed likely to strip the holy city of its most profitable ornaments. A papal brief authorised the removal of the miraculous oil of Rheims to the sick-room of the king, who imagined that his strength might be restored if he were again anointed. St. Francis of Paola, the most revered devotee of the time, was fetched from his Calabrian hermitage; the king threw himself at his feet, and begged that his days might be prolonged; but the saint replied "as a wise man should." Votive offerings and liberal gifts secured the intercession of the most influential saints, the prayers of the most holy communities,[8] for the health of the King of France. Yet he remained as inaccessible as he had ever been to priestly influence. His superstition required no mediator to approach the objects of its devotion. The vigour of his mind appeared to be unimpaired. "He punished many severely, wishing to inspire terror, and fearing to lose his authority, so he himself said. He changed appointments and disbanded companies of ordonance, cut down or suppressed pensions, and did all this for fear of being counted as one dead."[9] For the same reason, and in order that he might be constantly in men's minds, he caused fine horses and dogs, and all manner of strange beasts, to be bought in foreign

[8] Even the most distant monasteries—*e.g.*, St. Catharine's in Sinai—profited by the piety of Lewis XI.

[9] Commines, liv. vi. p. 6.

countries. Probably, also, by collecting curiosities and sending for players on musical instruments, and the like, he endeavoured to relieve the weariness of the inaction to which his failing strength condemned him, after a life of constant action and restless journeyings from one part of the kingdom to the other, during which hunting had been his only recreation, a pastime which he had pursued with the painful eagerness he showed in all things, often starting at daybreak, to return weary and wet at night. Strange rumours spread among the people. The king, it was said, drank, by the advice of his doctors, the blood of young children. The peasants who were compelled to pass near the mysterious and frowning towers of Plessis, were affrighted by the groans of prisoners dying on the rack; the fishermen who cast their nets into the river often drew to land the sacks in which the victims of the king's suspicion had been drowned; while Tristan L'Hermite and his satellites obeyed with ferocious and hasty zeal, each sanguinary whim of the tyrant.[1] Such tales were eagerly caught up and accredited by the king's enemies, and were amplified in the Burgundian chronicles[2] and in the writings of authors who, like Basin and Claude de Seissel, were personally hostile to Lewis. But we need not adorn the grave indictment which Lewis has to answer at the bar of history with the fanciful fictions of private and public rancour.

Death of Lewis XI.—Neither medical skill nor the

[1] Tristan L'Hermite, the provost-marshal of Charles VII. and Lewis XI., chamberlain, knight, and master of the artillery, had some time before retired from the king's service. It is probable that he died before the king.

[2] The Flemings believed that when Charles d'Amboise, Lord of Chaumont, one of the most virtuous, as well as of the most able ministers of Lewis, was buried, his coffin was found to be empty, because the devil had flown away with his body, as well as with his soul.—Barante, viii. p. 111. This affords some measure of the credulity of the time.

prayers of saints could prolong the king's life. On August 24, 1483, he had a third stroke of paralysis, and although he rallied sufficiently to recover his speech and the full use of his faculties, he felt that the end was come. He at once sent for Peter of Beaujeu, and ordered him to go to Amboise to the king—for so he already called his son; intrusting to him and to his wife the care and government of the nation and of its youthful sovereign, and giving him at the same time much good and useful counsel. Next he sent the chancellor, the archers and captains of his guard, and other officers to the new Court, begging all to serve his son faithfully, and sending by each some message or advice to the prince and his counsellors. Yet he did not entirely resign all hope of life till Oliver le Daim, his confessor, and his physician Coictier, warned him in abrupt and harsh terms "to make his peace with God, for that there was no other hope." He replied with firmness and dignity, and spent the remaining days of his life in religious exercises, and in the discussion of public affairs, retaining to the last the vigour of his intellect. Above all, he insisted that no offence should be given to foreign princes, and that every effort should be made to maintain peace during the minority of his son, in order that the kingdom might recover from its exhaustion, and the weight of taxation be alleviated. He died in his sixty-first year (August 30th, 1483), recommending his soul to the intercession of the Virgin, and especially to that of our Lady of Embrun, for, in accordance with the basest superstition of his time, the tutelary saint of each shrine was to him a separate and local deity. "Lord, in Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded," were the last words caught upon his lips. If his conscience did not suggest the inconsistency of this comfortable assurance, with the many acts of treachery and perhaps of cruelty

with which he may justly be charged, this is not so much to be attributed to any unusual deadness of moral sense in Lewis XI. as to the vileness of the age in which he lived. Nor when we compare him with the other princes of the 15th century does the deliberate judgment of Commines, pronounced when flattery was no longer profitable, appear extravagant: "He was more wise, more liberal, and more virtuous in all things than any contemporary sovereign."

Encouragement of Commerce and Learning.—We have seen that Lewis lamented that he had only been able to accomplish a part of what he regarded as the task of his reign. He had extended the frontiers of his kingdom. Picardy, Provence, Burgundy, Anjou, Maine, Roussillon had been compelled to acknowledge the immediate authority of the Crown. He had crushed the "Lords of the Lilies," the heads of that spurious feudal oligarchy which endeavoured to overthrow the power, to whose mistaken generosity it owed its existence. He had lived to see his most dangerous enemy wilfully shatter his strength against the indomitable resistance of the Swiss. He had baffled an attempt to construct a state which would certainly have limited the growth of France, and which might have threatened her national existence. He had at home secured the foundations of despotism. But his troubles and anxieties had not left him leisure to carry fully into execution his more salutary schemes for the encouragement of industry and of commerce, and for the improvement of the condition of the lower and middle classes. Nor could he secure the peace and the social order which would alone have enabled such reforms as he did introduce to bring forth their full fruit. Yet much was done. A great part of the numerous ordinances, which attest his unwearied activity, are concerned with the regulation and encour-

agement of trade. Many of these, as might be expected from the economical ignorance of the age, are idle or mischievous, yet the worst contrast not unfavourably with the restrictive legislation of Edward IV. Foreign merchants were encouraged to frequent the great fairs of Champagne; and new fairs, with similar privileges and equal freedom of trade, were established at Arras, Caen, Lyons, Bayonne, and other places. In 1464 a treaty was concluded with the towns of the Hanseatic League, and the preamble of the ordinance confirming the privileges of their merchants laments, that owing to the vexations to which they had been subject they had almost ceased to visit France, to the great loss and detriment of the commonwealth. This treaty was confirmed and enlarged in 1473, and again shortly before the death of Lewis XI. He probably was anxious on other than commercial grounds to conciliate the friendship of these rivals and enemies of the Dutch. At the beginning of the reign of Lewis, a French navy did not exist; in 1470 the admiral of Bourbon was able to assemble sixty well-armed ships. The king endeavoured to encourage maritime enterprise by navigation laws, restricting the importation of foreign goods to those shipped on French vessels. The acquisition of Provence gave a great impulse to French commerce and influence in the Levant, which had steadily declined since the ruin of James Cœur. In 1480 a fleet was fitted out to repress the piracy of the Barbary States, whose Corsairs had infested even the coasts of Languedoc. It was on this occasion that criminals were first used as galley slaves. In the south, mulberries were largely planted by the king's orders, and he endeavoured to induce by his liberality workmen who were skilled in the manufacture of silk to settle in the country.

A printing press had been established by three Germans

in the Sorbonne as early as 1469, two or three years later a second was set up. Those who practised the new art were encouraged and protected by the king, and in a few years even provincial towns, such as Lyons, Caen, and Angers, had their presses. Yet the demand for books was greater than the supply, and many works were sold in France which had been printed in Germany, at Mainz or Cologne, at Strasburg or Basel. How considerable this trade was is shown by the fact that the unsold stock of the agent of one German house was valued at 2425 gold crowns[3] Nor was Lewis hostile to the new learning, which had already begun to revolutionise the thought of the west. Not a few distinguished Greeks, who had escaped from the ruin of Constantinople, found a refuge and decent hospitality in France.[4] Their disciples applauded the contemptuous vigour with which Lewis interfered to check the still noisy and virulent although barren and narrow disputations of the schools.

The University.—The authority and the fame of the University of Paris had greatly declined in the course of the 15th century. During the unhappy reign of Charles VI. it had for a moment interfered in politics with almost sovereign authority: at the council of Constance its doctors had been looked up to as entitled by their orthodoxy and their science to guide the deliberations of the fathers of Christendom. These doctors had

[3] He died at Paris, and the books were sold in accordance with the *droit d'aubaine* for the benefit of the Crown. The money was repaid by Lewis XI., "in consideration of the services of the firm to whom they belonged to letters and education, and of the importance of encouraging an art so conducive to the advancement of learning."

[4] Francis Philelphus, the son-in-law of Chrysoloras, writes to recommend George Glizin, a Greek exile, to Lewis XI. He adds, that the kindness with which others who had escaped from the destruction of their homes had been received, proves that his recommendation is indeed superfluous.

boldly proclaimed that kings might lawfully be deposed if they neglected the duties of their office; that the good of the community was the supreme law in church and state, to which the authority of temporal and spiritual rulers alike must bow. Henceforward the university was exposed to the enmity of both king and Pope, as well as to the jealousy of the Parliament, which regarded it with the dislike of a rival profession, and abominated the violence and unsoundness of its political principles. Other circumstances contributed to its decline; the long isolation of Paris during the English wars, the defective organisation and decay of its colleges, the establishment of rival universities, the withdrawal of all intellectual interest from the scholastic philosophy. Lewis XI. regarded the democratic tendencies and the privileges of the university with suspicion and aversion; the disputations of its rival schools with contempt. Nominalism, but a nominalism widely different from the enlightened philosophy of Occam, had for some time been the prevalent doctrine of the University of Paris. Yet the realists, supported by the authority of other learned bodies, had begun to gain ground, and the king, incited, it is said, by his confessor, ordered (1474) all teachers to conform to the opinions of Aristotle, of his commentator Averrhoes, of Aquinas and Bonaventura and Scotus. The books of Occam, of Buridan, of Peter of Ailli, and of other nominalists, were proscribed, and the Parliament was ordered to see that they were seized. Only those who swore to conform to the king's edict might receive degrees. The nominalists agitated busily against what they justly considered an unwarrantable persecution; the Roman court espoused their cause, careless, as it would seem, of the philosophical basis of orthodoxy, or strong in the unassailable position that a miracle is exempt from all logical

form. In less than three years the obnoxious edict was revoked.

Transitional State of Literature.—The reign of Lewis XI. is not distinguished by many names which are conspicuous in the history of French literature; yet there are few periods more deserving of the attention of the historian of letters. The weak, and I venture to think overrated, poetry of Charles of Orleans continues the traditions of the "Trouvères" and of the "Roman de la Rose"; Oliver de la Marche continues to write history in the spirit of a herald and a court chronicler, although he is wholly wanting in the naive grace and graphic garrulity of Froissart. Chastellain and his imitators in their pursuit of style lose themselves in a maze of grandiloquent and awkwardly constructed sentences; they understand neither the resources nor the limits of the instrument which they use. Yet the authors whom I have mentioned were the contemporaries of Villon and of Philip de Commines. Villon, an adventurer and a spendthrift of the lowest class, offered to succeeding poets a model, which it would have been well had they more closely followed. I speak with hesitation on a subject so incomprehensible to a foreigner, but in him I seem to recognise the source of a pure vein of poetry, too soon lost in the exaggerated classicism and puerile affectation of the next century. In the memoirs of Commines we trace for the first time the characteristic merits of the best French prose. Precision, sobriety, a clear and logical development of ideas. His language is simple and idiomatic. He had not the education of a scholar, and to this perhaps he owes the excellence of his style. He was not exposed to the temptation of striving to reproduce, in a still scarcely-formed tongue, Latin rhetoric and constructions. He completely turns his back on the old world

of chivalry, with its pomps and affectations. Unlike the chroniclers who preceded him, he dwells upon the causes of events, their significance, and the lessons which may be learnt from them by statesmen. Although the favourite adviser of a king, whose reign was devoted to the establishment of despotism, he astonishes us by the liberality and width of his views. Yet his liberalism may easily be exaggerated. For the commons he seems to have felt the contempt of a noble and a courtier. He has no sympathy with the democratic movement of the great towns. He calls the leading citizens "thick-witted and foolish folk, who have no knowledge of great matters, or of those which appertain to the government of a state." He speaks with undisguised contempt of the jurists, "who have always some legal saw on their lips." He is fond of moralising and of speculating on the mysterious dispensations of Providence; yet his statecraft differs little from that of Machiavelli's "Prince." To know how to bribe skilfully, how to suborn the subjects and servants of another, is a great grace granted by God to wise rulers, and it is a proof that they are not stained with the grievous infirmity and sin of pride. This great vice, pride, enters into Charles the Rash like some blinding demon after the field of Montl'héri, driving him on to folly and ruin; while in his adversary is exemplified the opposite virtue of humility, to which, more than to anything else, his success is attributed.

Conclusion.—We have repeatedly had occasion to remark upon the depraved tone of public morality during this period. It is probably true that the average standard of domestic virtue among men of the middle class is subject to no very wide variations. Yet this also appears to have been exceptionally low in France during the 15th century. Continual foreign and civil wars, seditions and

sufferings, could not but brutalise the character of the nation; and at the same time the restraints of traditional religion and ethics were weakened by the irresistible progress of thought. Among the higher and more cultivated classes the immediate effect of the new interest in the culture of antiquity appears to have been the addition of a more refined and cynical depravity to the ferocity of the mediæval noble.[5] The intellectual preceded the moral awakening. Yet all was prepared for the new phase of national life of which the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. was the signal. Charles VIII. possessed none of the qualities of a general or even of a soldier, except a restless and ill-directed desire of military distinction. But after the Government had passed through the dangerous ordeal of a regency, this weak and incapable youth found himself the most powerful monarch in Europe. He was able to undertake a vast scheme of foreign conquest. He obtained successes so brilliant, that his subjects were too much dazzled to discern the mediocrity of his parts and the disastrous tendencies of his policy. The strong position of Charles VIII., the resources which he was able to squander in his Italian war, prove how thoroughly and successfully Lewis XI. had carried out a part at least of his aims. It is as interesting, as it probably is unprofitable, to speculate what the future of France and of Europe might have been if his successors had inherited with the monarchy which he had consolidated, his dread of becoming involved

[5] Many instances might be cited. Gilles de Laval, Lord of Retz, the child-murderer and prototype of Bluebeard, was first tempted to practise his horrid cruelties by the study of Tacitus and Suetonius. In England some of the most ruthless characters of the wars of the Roses were patrons of art and learning. The Earl of Worcester, whose cruelty earned the name of the Butcher, had himself professed at Padua.

in the dangerous maze of Italian politics, his watchful jealousy of the growing power of the Austro-Burgundian family, his wiser and more sober schemes for the aggrandisement of his kingdom.

PRINTED BY NEILL AND COMPANY, EDINBURGH.

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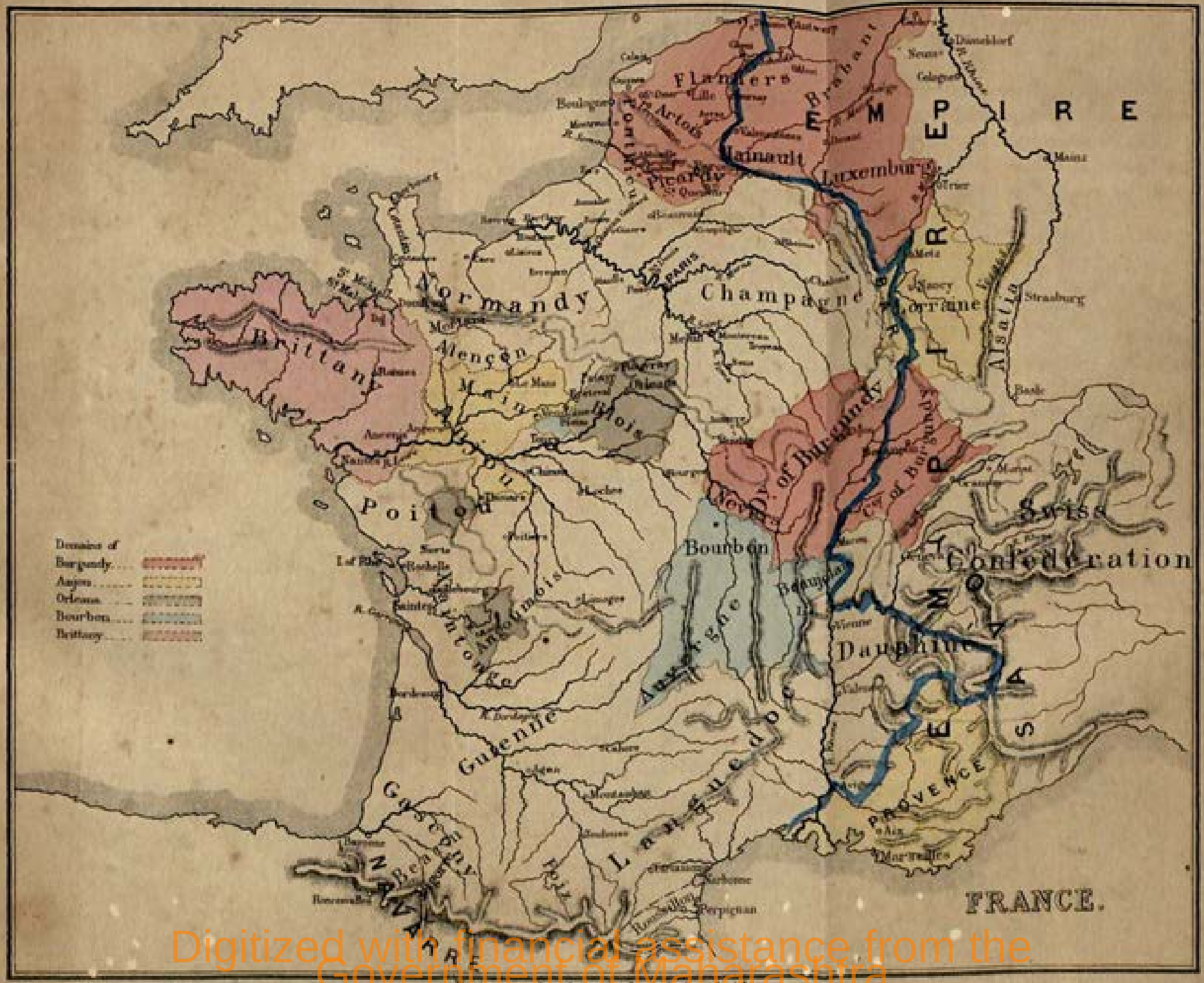

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